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Woodrow Wilson's Executive Agents in Mexico: From the Beginning of His Administration to the Recognition of Venustiano Carranza. (Volumes I and II).

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WOODROW WILSON'S EXECUTIVE AGENTS IN MEXICO: FROM THE BEGINNING OF HIS ADMINISTRATION TO THE RECOGNITION OF VENUSTIANO CARRANZA

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ABSTRACT

Woodrow Wilson, upon becoming President of the United States in March, 1913, refused diplomatic recognition to Mexico's provisional president, Victoriano Huerta, because he had seized power by military coup d'etat. Wilson then sent an executive agent, William Bayard Hale, to Mexico City to investigate the nature of Huerta's regime and the role of American Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson in the usurper's rise to power. Another agent, Reginald Del Valle, appraised the merits of the Constitutionalists—revolutionaries in Northern Mexico led by Venustiano Carranza. Hale found both Huerta and Ambassador Wilson guilty of gross wrongdoing, while Del Valle adjudged the Constitutionalists unworthy of support from the United States. Ambassador Wilson was recalled and, for the next three years, executive agents carried on diplomatic relations with Mexican leaders.

Some of the diplomatic agents were personal representatives of the President. In August and November, 1913, John Lind attempted to persuade Huerta to remove himself from office and was twice rebuffed. Meanwhile, Hale offered Carranza guidance from Washington in establishing a constitutionally legitimate government in Mexico City

and was also rebuffed. In August, 1915, David Lawrence failed to persuade Carranza to accept mediation of six Pan-American nations in ending the Mexican civil war.

Other presidential agents served primarily as fact-finders. Lind scrutinized the Huerta government and the intensifying revolution between August, 1913, and April, 1914. After the fall of Huerta in July, 1914, Paul Fuller attempted to determine which revolutionary leaders were most capable of establishing a new constitutional government. When the revolutionaries were unable to do so peacefully, Duval West attempted in the Spring of 1915 to determine whether they were capable of ever establishing a stable government.

Some of the executive agents represented the State Department. In order to minimize the danger to foreign lives and property that resulted from the continuing civil war, the Department assigned agents to accompany revolutionary leaders. George C. Carothers travelled with General Pancho Villa from December, 1914, to October, 1915, and John R. Silliman joined Carranza in July, 1914. Assisted by John W. Belt, Silliman remained in this capacity until March, 1916. Leon J. Canova served on roving mission between June, 1914, and January, 1915. Although never officially accredited as an agent, H. L. Hall accompanied Emiliano Zapata, the revolutionary leader of the South, and, between October, 1914, and August,

1916, informed the Department of developments in that part of Mexico.

Fact-finders Hale and Lind, together with State Department Agent Carothers, succeeded by Spring, 1914, in persuading President Wilson that the Constitutionalists' program deserved the support of the United States. Because Villa continually responded more favorably to Wilson's urgings than did Carranza, the American President, acting through Agents Carothers and Canova, sought to promote Villa's ascendency in Mexican politics. In the process, Carothers and Canova became as much the agents of Pancho Villa as of the State Department. Silliman became similarly involved with Carranza's faction. Carothers exercised considerable influence over Villa's actions and attitudes, but Silliman did not likewise influence Carranza.

By mid-October, 1915, Carranza, having overcome the influences of Carothers and Canova, the unfavorable reports of Del Valle, Fuller, and West, and the ineffectuality of Silliman, triumphed by force of arms and received de facto recognition from President Wilson. The interference of Wilson and his agents doubtless left an enduring legacy of animosity in Mexico. Yet their activities helped promote a revolutionary victory, which ultimately benefitted the Mexican people.

This dissertation was researched primarily from government archives and manuscript and newspaper collections in the United States and Mexico.

PREFACE

From the earliest days of the Republic, Presidents of the United States have utilized the services of special executive agents in the conduct of diplomatic relations. George Washington set the precedent in designating Gouverneur Morris as his "private agent" to carry on some secret negotiations with agents of the King of Great Britain. Subsequent administrations found the services of such agents invaluable, especially in the conduct of secret diplomacy.

His use of executive agents allows the President to conduct foreign relations without consulting the Senate in any way. Their salaries and expenses are usually drawn from the President's secret contingent fund, for the expenditure of which he is not required to make an accounting. They are not, strictly speaking, public ministers or foreign service officers, but they are usually accorded the same privileges and immunities by foreign governments as are officially accredited representatives of the United States Government.

Few, if any, Presidents have utilized executive agents as extensively as did Woodrow Wilson. For example, he sent Colonel Edward M. House on missions to England and

Europe during World War I; he approved Elihu Root's good-will mission to Russia following the revolution of March, 1917; and he named a board of experts, called the Inquiry, to advise him on post-war problems and had many of these men accompany him to the Versailles Conference. But his very implementation of this policy occurred even before World War I, when, beginning in 1913, he sent executive agents scurrying all over Mexico.

Some of his agents Wilson sent to Mexico on fact-finding missions, and, although their reports were often routed through the State Department, they were directly responsible to the President. This group included William Bayard Hale, Reginaldo Del Valle, Paul Fuller, and Duval West. Others were sent to carry on diplomatic relations with the government in Mexico City or with leaders of the revolutionary factions. One, John Lind, was responsible directly to the President. For a time, he also served as a fact-finding agent. Another, David Lawrence, went of his own volition but with the President's blessing, and had only the most tenuous ties to the White House. Others, including George C. Carothers, John Silliman, Leon J. Canova, John W. Belt, and H. L. Hall, were State Department agents. Carothers and Silliman served simultaneously as consuls, Belt as a consular secretary, and their salaries were paid by the Consular Service.

What follows is an account of the activities and the diplomacy of these eleven men and the influence they exerted on Wilson's foreign policy and on the course of the Mexican Revolution.

CHAPTER I

A NEED FOR INFORMATION

Mexico provided Woodrow Wilson with the first stern test of his skill as a diplomatist. When he began his presidency, he had no experience or training in the conduct of foreign relations. During his notable academic career as a professor of political science and history and as president of Princeton University, Wilson devoted himself mainly to the study of domestic politics and legislative processes. He scarcely mentioned foreign affairs in the presidential campaign of 1912, and his inaugural address dealt exclusively with domestic problems.[1]

Wilson did not consider himself handicapped by these apparent deficiencies in his training. The orthodox tenets of foreign policy, such as expediency, protection of material interests, and national self-interest, were relatively unimportant to him. He insisted that morality should be the principal consideration in international conduct, and he envisioned a new era in which the foreign policy of the United States would be determined by moral purposes and guided by idealism. Wilson's own idealism

[1]Ray Stannard Baker, Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters (8 vols.; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., 1931), IV, 55-56; Arthur S. Link, Wilson the Diplomatist (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1957), 3-11.

grew out of the beliefs and values of Christianity, more particularly the Presbyterian theology inculcated in him by his father.[2]

In selecting William Jennings Bryan as his first Secretary of State, Wilson chose a man equally ignorant of foreign affairs, but one who shared his president's Presbyterian background and faith in Christian ethics as the proper guideposts in relations between men and nations. Incorporated in Wilson and Bryan's idealism was a missionary zeal to do good works and a concept of America's unique mission in world affairs. Because democratic institutions, which to them were the most Christian and ideal, had flourished in the United States, they believed that their country was divinely commissioned to promote the establishment of such institutions in nations that did not possess them. This often led them to believe that they knew, better than did the leaders of those countries themselves, what was best for countries that seemed less fortunate than the United States. Their determination to render service caused Wilson and Bryan to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations on a scale greater than any

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[2]Link, Wilson The Diplomatist, 16-18; Harley Notter, The Origins of the Foreign Policy of Woodrow Wilson (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1937), 269; Arthur S. Link, Wilson: The New Freedom (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1956), 277-78; John Morton Blum, Woodrow Wilson and the Politics of Morality (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Co., 1956), 84-85.

previous administration had contemplated.[3]

Wilson never bore criticism well, and, more often than not, he believed that those who attacked his policies were inadequately informed. More likely to follow his own intuition than to accept expert advice, he particularly suspected any adverse opinions that might come from State Department staff members and Foreign Service officers, most of whom were Republican holdovers. Despite the fact that most of them had received their appointments on a merit basis, Wilson and Bryan looked upon them as pseudo-experts, representatives of an aristocratic clique, who would be more inclined to promote the material interests of Americans abroad than to pursue altruistic goals.[4]

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[3]Link, New Freedom, 278; Arthur S. Link, Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1954), 81-82; Paolo E. Coletta, William Jennings Bryan, Vol. II: Progressive Politician and Moral Statesman, 1909-1915 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), 92-95, 182-183; Richard Challener, "William Jennings Bryan," An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1961), 81-84.

[4]Link, New Freedom, 67-70; Link, Wilson The Diplomatist, 24-25. Beginning with the Theodore Roosevelt Administration, the State Department increasingly made appointments on a merit basis. By executive order, Roosevelt placed all diplomatic and consular posts, except for the rank of ambassador and minister, on a civil-service system, requiring competitive examinations. In 1906 Congress gave legislative sanction to his moves in regard to the consular service. William Howard Taft continued this policy, and, during his administration, created a Bureau of Appointments to review applications and administer examinations for diplomatic and consular posts. See Graham H. Stuart, The Department of State: A History of its Organization, Procedure and Personnel (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1949), 205-206, 219.

Desiring a house-cleaning, Bryan argued that the merit system should be scrapped: Republican incumbents should be removed and replaced by "deserving Democrats." Wilson rejected this appeal for an outright return to the spoils system, but when foreign affairs grew critical, he continued to show his distaste for the professionals of the State Department by taking personal command of the situation and relying upon special executive agents to carry out his diplomatic missions.[5] His reliance upon special agents rather than professionals to help solve a particular diplomatic problem, along with his frequent simultaneous employment of men who sometimes held conflicting opinions, partly explains why his conduct of foreign affairs seemed erratic, even impulsive, at times. Perhaps there is no better example of this than in his relations with Mexico.

On February 18, 1913, just weeks before Wilson's inauguration, Mexican President Francisco I. Madero was toppled from power by a military coup d'etat. Madero

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[5]Baker, Woodrow Wilson, IV, 217-18; Link, New Freedom, 105-107; Link, Wilson The Diplomatist, 22-25; Coletta, Progressive Politician and Moral Statesman, 100-102; Stuart, The Department of State, 225-30. Because of the civil-service system established by Roosevelt and Taft, Bryan was able to make relatively few changes in the personnel of the consular service. Since there were no such restrictions preventing him from making changes in the diplomatic corps, Bryan, whenever Wilson permitted it, replaced Republicans with Democratic office-seekers. He was particularly prone to reward political confederates who had remained loyal to him since 1896.

himself had been elevated to power by leading a revolution which overthrew the thirty-five year old dictatorship of Profirio Díaz. Madero, however, was no radical, but a nineteenth-century liberal, and he failed to gauge accurately the urgency of the revolutionary demands of many who had rallied to his side in fighting the dictator. He placed too much faith in the ability of free elections and democratic institutions to right the social and economic inequities that plagued his nation. Once elected president, he proved incapable of leading what proved to be one of the great social revolutions of the twentieth century.[6]

Whatever the limits of his own reformism, even Madero's modest efforts to challenge the status quo were hampered by a hostile Senate held over from the Díaz regime and a Chamber of Deputies which was hopelessly split by factional disputes. The influential Catholic Party and conservative press vociferously opposed liberal reform. Adding to Madero's woes, Emiliano Zapata and Pascual Orozco, two of his former military chieftains, became disenchanted with their president and took their grievances

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[6]Anita Brenner and George R. Leighton, The Wind That Swept Mexico (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943), 25-29; Charles Curtis Cumberland, The Mexican Revolution: Genesis Under Madero (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1952), 30, 208-28, 256-58; Stanley R. Ross, Francisco I. Madero (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 218-49; Manuel González Ramírez, La Revolución Social de México, Vol. I: Las Ideas - La Violencia (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960), 175-80, 312-18, 325-34.

into the field in the form of armed rebellion. Such uprisings, in turn, made Madero's government increasingly dependent upon the federal army, the Achilles heel of many a Latin-American constitutional regime.[7]

Compounding Madero's difficulties with the hostile attitude of the ambassador from the United States, Henry Lane Wilson. Because he was the only ambassador accredited to Mexico City, the diplomatic representative of the other powers holding the rank of minister, Wilson assumed the role of dean of the diplomatic corps. In this capacity, and as the official representative of what he considered to be a superior people, Ambassador Wilson assumed that President Madero would seek his advice. Wilson's personal attitudes, however, made this impossible. An admirer of former dictator Porfirio Díaz, the ambassador did not think the Mexican people capable of self-government. Such an attitude made his counsels incompatible with Madero's expressed desires to promote political democracy in his country. His advice spurned, Wilson grew increasingly antagonistic toward the new government and vocally critical of President Madero.

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[7]Cumberland, The Mexican Revolution, 184-99; Ross, Francisco I. Madero, 226-32; Gonzáles Ramírez, Las Ideas - La Violencia, 304-306; Michael C. Meyer, Mexican Rebel: Pascual Orozco and the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1915 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), 55-62; John Womack, Jr., Zapata and the Mexican Revolution (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 124-28.

Madero's refusal to follow the advice of the American diplomat was not the only source of antagonism between the two. An appointee of the William Howard Taft Administration, Henry Lane Wilson naturally believed that his major responsibility in Mexico was to promote American business interests and ensure the protection of Americans and their property. The rebellions in Mexico, which took a toll in American lives and property, and Madero's inability to quell them, were a constant source of irritation to the ambassador. It was no secret that he yearned for a more authoritarian regime in Mexico and repeatedly prophesied that Madero's ineffective government could not last. Knowing well that the Democratic Party in the United States had adopted an anti-imperialist stance since 1898, Madero looked forward to the inauguration of Woodrow Wilson, anticipating that the Republican ambassador would be recalled.[8]

Madero's wish was ultimately fulfilled, but not in time to do him any good. On February 9, 1913, Felix Díaz, a nephew of Porfirio Díaz, led several army units in

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[8]Ross, Francisco I. Madero, 236-40; Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), 128-30; Lowell L. Blaisdell, "Henry Lane Wilson and the Overthrow of Madero," Southwestern Social Science Quarterly, XVIII (September, 1962), 128-29; Eugene F. Massingill, "The Diplomatic Career of Henry Lane Wilson in Latin-America," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1957, pp. 87-93.

revolt against the government in Mexico City. Madero had no other recourse but to call in additional federal army units to defend himself, placing them under the command of General Victoriano Huerta. Although there had been considerable antagonism between President Madero and the general, Huerta had an outstanding record of loyal service to the government and had proved on more than one occasion that he was one of the better commanders in the federal army. What Madero did not take into account was the fact that Huerta, an admirer of the Porfirian regime, had no faith in the workability of democratic institutions in Mexico. As an army officer, he was a stern exponent of order and was annoyed by the recurrent disorders that followed the downfall of the dictatorship.

At age fifty-nine, Huerta was bald, stocky in build, and had an oval-shaped high cheek-boned face that revealed his Indian ancestry. A consumer of legendary quantities of brandy, he was plagued by cataracts and usually wore smoked glasses. When he appeared without them, he squinted, and this gave him a sinister countenance. Although he was not a party to the original Felix Díaz revolt, Huerta did not seriously attempt to put it down. Instead, while his troops mounted feeble attacks on the rebel stronghold, he negotiated with the insurrectionists and ultimately conspired with Díaz to oust Madero. On February 18, Huerta ordered the arrest of

Madero and Vice President José M. Pino Suárez and assumed control of the government.[9]

During the ten days of mock battle (February 9-18, Decena Tragica), Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson took an active part in efforts to terminate the military action. Instead of blaming the insurrectionists, he insisted that Madero's faltering leadership was responsible for the protracted violence which threatened the lives and property of innocents, including foreigners. He had long since concluded that the little president's ineffectual regime would be toppled sooner or later; therefore, he believed his responsibility was to hasten its fall in order to put an end to the carnage and destruction. He applied pressure through government officials and members of the diplomatic corps, seeking Madero's resignation, but the beleaguered president refused to capitulate. The ambassador then approached General Huerta, who reported that the conflict would soon be terminated. Although he was not a party to the Díaz-Huerta conspiracy before the arrest of Madero, Ambassador Wilson was made aware that the president's ouster was imminent. Indeed, Wilson was

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[9]Cumberland, The Mexican Revolution, 233-38; Ross, Francisco I. Madero, 191-202, 263-67, 284-309; George Jay Rausch, Jr., "Victoriano Huerta: A Political Biography," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Illinois, 1960, pp. 1-69; William L. Sherman and Richard E. Greenleaf, Victoriano Huerta: A Reappraisal (México, D.F.: Mexico City College Press, 1960), 63-71.

informed of the success of the coup well before it became a matter of public knowledge.

With Madero removed from power, Ambassador Wilson set about insuring that the successor would be strong enough to maintain order. The day of Madero's arrest, Wilson arranged a conference at the American Embassy between Díaz and Huerta. Under the aegis of the American Ambassador, an agreement, known as the Pact of the Embassy, was hammered out, whereby Huerta was to become provisional president. Huerta, in turn, agreed to operate with a cabinet chosen by Díaz. Since the constitution precluded a provisional president from succeeding himself as elective president, Huerta agreed to support Díaz in the next election. At the ambassador's urging, both Huerta and Díaz on February 18 promised to do all in their power to restore order in Mexico. Confident that he had played a key role in saving a prostrate nation from further chaos, Wilson then triumphantly presented Huerta and Díaz to a gathering of the diplomatic corps, heralding them as the guarantors of stability in Mexico.[10]

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[10]Cumberland, The Mexican Revolution, 238; Ross, Francisco I. Madero, 297-311; Cline, The United States and Mexico, 131-32; Massingill, "The Diplomatic Career of Henry Lane Wilson in Latin America," 137-71; Blaisdell, "Henry Lane Wilson and the Overthrow of Madero," Southwestern Social Science Quarterly, XVIII, 130-33; Alberto M. Carreño, La Diplomacia Extraordinaria entre México y Estados Unidos (2 vols.; México, D.F.: Editorial Jus, 1951), II, 265-66; Isidro Fabela, Historia Diplomática

The next day President Madero and Vice President Pino Suárez were forced to resign, making Foreign Minister Pedro S. Lascuráin the constitutional successor. As soon as the Chamber of Deputies ratified these changes, Lascuráin appointed General Huerta Minister of Gobernación, thus making Huerta the legal heir to the presidency. Within minutes, Lascuráin, too, resigned, and the Chamber ratified Huerta's succession to the provisional presidency. At least technically, therefore, Huerta's accession to power was carried out in accordance with constitutional processes.

The manner in which the cynical old general had usurped the power of state was entirely in keeping with the precedents of Mexican history. The one incident in the whole episode that shocked the world was the murder of Madero and Pino Suárez on February 22. Although the government's report of the incident indicated that they had been shot during an attempt to prevent them from being incarcerated in the federal penitentiary, few accepted this official explanation. It is difficult to assess absolute responsibility for the murders. Both the Huertistas and

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de la Revolución Mexicana (2 vols.; México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1958-1959), I, 69-118; Kenneth J. Grieb, The United States and Huerta (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), 15-21.

the Felicistas (Felix Díaz faction) had discussed the advisability of their being eliminated; but, whether it was Huerta, Díaz, or one or more of their subalterns who ordered the assassinations, the records do not reveal. Neither faction can be absolved of partial blame, since no one made adequate precautions for their safety.[11]

Nor was Henry Lane Wilson innocent of responsibility. Because of his involvement in the events of the Decena Tragica, the American Embassy naturally became the focal point of those who wished to save the deposed president's life. Secretary of State Philander C. Knox, members of the diplomatic corps, and friends and relatives of Madero all beseeched Wilson to use his obvious influence with the new government to insure the safety of Madero and Pino Suárez. Wilson did reluctantly accompany the German Minister to ask Huerta for such guarantees, and the old general responded favorably. On another occasion, however, Huerta asked the ambassador's advice on the advisability of exiling Madero or confining him to a lunatic asylum. Wilson revealed his indifference to Madero's welfare by replying that the general should do what was "best for the peace of Mexico." To others who approached him concerning

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[11]Cumberland, The Mexican Revolution, 240-41; Ross, Francisco I. Madero, 326-31; Rausch, "Victoriano Huerta," 82-88; Sherman and Greenleaf, Victoriano Huerta, 79-84; Ramon Prida, From Despotism to Anarchy (El Paso: El Paso Publishing Co., 1914), 196-201.

the safety of the fallen president, the Ambassador responded that he could not interfere in the internal affairs of Mexico.[12]

By Huerta's own admission, the most critical problem facing tis provisional government was securing diplomatic recognition from the world powers, particularly from the United States. Recognition meant a renewal of old loans and possibly new ones that would be needed to make his regime a stable one.[13] At a meeting of the diplomatic corps on February 21, Henry Lane Wilson urged the envoys of the foreign powers to impress upon their governments, as a means of promoting stable conditions in Mexico, the necessity of according diplomatic recognition to the new government. Thus, he implied without justification that United States would soon extend recognition. All of the European powers and most of the Latin American governments accorded Huerta's regime diplomatic recognition in March and April. Despite Wilson's urging, the Taft Administration refused to follow suit. The Ambassador emphasized that Huerta was pro-American and would give

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[12]Cumberland, The Mexican Revolution, 239-40; Ross, Francisco I. Madero, 321-26; Massingill, "The Diplomatic Career of Henry Lane Wilson in Latin America," 180-90; Fabela, Historia Diplomatica de la Revolución Mexicana, I, 154-58; Grieb, The United States and Huerta, 24-28.

[13]Victoriano Huerta, Memorias de Victoriano Huerta (México, D.F.: Ediciónes "Vertice", 1957), 93.

prompt attention to his requests, but Secretary of State Knox wanted several matters, including damage claims, the Chamizal controversy, and the distribution of Colorado River waters, settled before extending recognition. These disputes had not been settled when Woodrow Wilson became President on March 4, and the matter of recognition passed into his hands.[14]

President Wilson had little knowledge of Latin American history and politics, and he looked at the Mexican situation from a frame of reference based on Anglo-American history and theory. He seemed unaware that the succession of Latin American governments was more likely to result from violence than from fair and free elections. Because Madero had championed political democracy while being elected president in the freest elections ever held in Mexico, Wilson assumed that the maintenance of democratic institutions was as important to Mexicans as to Anglo-Americans. Failing to perceive that, among Mexican reformers, social and economic adjustments were considered vastly more important than political democracy, Wilson believed that a government established by force must be

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[14]Cline, The United States and Mexico, 133-34; Massingill, "The Diplomatic Career of Henry Lane Wilson in Latin America," 202-209; Grieb, The United States and Huerta, 36-37. The "Chamizal" is a six-hundred acre tract of land near El Paso claimed by both the United States and Mexico because of change in course of the Rio Grande.

oppressive. He ignored the fact that most of Huerta's cabinet members were considered to be reformers, and he judged the provisional government to be a reactionary regime.[15]

Seeking for himself and his nation continued favorable relations with the Huerta government, Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson bombarded the new Democratic Administration in Washington with requests for recognition of the Mexico City regime. He pointed out that it was the de facto government of the republic and had been established "in accordance with constitutional precedents."[16] President Wilson, however, arrived at his own conclusion: the constitutional government of Mexico had been usurped, and he could not recognize a government of murderers. In

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[15]Grieb, The United States and Huerta, 42-43; Samuel Flagg Bemis, "Woodrow Wilson and Latin America," Edward H. Buehrig (ed.), Wilson's Foreign Policy in Perspective (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1957), 113-16; Jorge Vera Estañol, La Revolución Mexicana: Orígenes y Resultados (México, D.F.: Editorial Porrua, S.A., 1957), 277-84. Vera Estañol, who was Huerta's first Minister of Public Instruction, describes the background of each cabinet member and points out that only the Minister of War, General Manuel Mondragón, was not considered a reformer. Vera Estañol argues that revolutionary propaganda, which branded the group as reactionaries, throwbacks to the Porfirian regime, gave a false and unjustified impression of the group.

[16]Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson to Department of State, March 8, 12, and April 9, 1913, Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1913 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920), 760, 772, 776.

order to make his position clear to the world and to discourage future military coups in Latin America, on March 11, just a week after taking office, the President issued a statement of foreign policy making himself the judge of the constitutional legitimacy of Latin American governments:

> We hold . . . that just government rests always upon the consent of the governed . . . We can have no sympathy with those who seek to seize the power of government to advance their own personal interests or ambitions . . . As friends, therefore, we shall prefer those who act in the interests of peace and honor, who protect private rights and respect the restraints of constitutional provision.[17]

Thus, Wilson announced his intention of breaking the tradition of recognizing de facto regimes if they did not meet his standards of constitutional legitimacy.

If Wilson had needed a more practical reason for denying Huerta de facto recognition, it was readily available. It was by no means certain that the old general would be able to control his country. Although all but four state governors had immediately acknowledged allegiance to the new regime, and the federal army was devotedly loyal to Huerta, the dissidents were growing in number. Emiliano Zapata refused to come to terms with the new government, and his bands controlled the mountains that ringed Mexico City to the south and west. At this stage in his long revolutionary career, the agrarian

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[17]New York Times, March 12, 1913, p. 1.

reformer from the State of Morelos had already surrounded himself with ardent revolutionaries, some of Marxian persuasion, who made his faction the most radical in Mexico. Just thirty-four, Zapata, a small man with darting black eyes and an enormous drooping mustache, was suspicious of any government that established itself in the capital city. Each one that he had confronted had attempted to persuade him to compromise his reform program as outlined in the Plan of Ayala, a document that amounted to a holy writ to the rebels who rallied to his side. In accordance with the plan, Zapata fully intended to return lands that had been despoiled from the peasants during the Porfirian regime and to expropriate and redistribute one-third of the _hacienda_ (large plantation or ranch) lands of his district. Not concerned with reforming all of Mexico, his was a local peasant revolution, and he was prepared to fight until his demands were unconditionally accepted.[18]

In the northeastern state of Coahuila, Venustiano Carranza, the constitutionally elected governor, refused to acknowledge allegiance to the Huerta regime. Tall and

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[18]Womack, _Zapata_, 159-77; González Ramírez, _Las Ideas - La Violencia_, 259, 278-83; Manuel González Ramírez, _La Revolución Social de México_, Vol. III: _El Problema Agrario_ (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1966), 202-205; Robert P. Dillon, _Zapata: The Ideology of A Peasant Revolutionary_ (New York: International Publishers, 1969), 39-41; "Plan de Ayala," Manuel González Ramírez (ed.), _Fuentes para la Historia de la_

taciturn, with a flowing white beard, Carranza, at age fifty-five, was a patriarchal figure. No radical, he was, as Madero had been, the heir to Mexico's nineteenth-century liberal tradition. A lawyer, he represented the urban middle-class. He surrounded himself with lawyers and other middle-class professionals and was approachable only through these intermediaries. He was too insufferably certain of his own rectitude to be popular, and he did not have the charisma to be a beloved leader of the masses. Yet, he was to dominate the Mexican Revolution until 1919.

Always properly legalistic, Carranza followed the hallowed Mexican practice of stating at the outset the purposes of a revolt. On March 26, 1913, he promulgated his Plan of Guadalupe. Claiming that Huerta had assumed power by unconstitutional means, Carranza dedicated his revolution to restoring constitutional government; hence, the name of his followers became the "Constitutionalists." Refusing to take the title of "provisional president," since by doing so he would be ineligible to become elective president, Carranza assumed the title of "First Chief of the Constitutionalist Army in Charge of Executive Power." Although he cited the assassination of Madero as justification for rebelling, other considerations were probably

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Revolución Mexicana, Vol. I: Planes Políticos y otros documentos (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1954), 73-85.

more important to him. Without making an issue of the death of Madero, Carranza, who had been a leading Maderista in the fight against Porfirio Díaz, entered into negotiations with Huerta officials to discuss his possible recognition of the provisional government. As conditions, he demanded a high degree of state sovereignty for Coahuila and extensive power for himself. Huerta refused the terms. Only then did Carranza secure a resolution from the Coahuila legislature condemning the general as a usurper. Carranza's rebellion, therefore, was prompted as much by personal ambition and a determination to maintain absolute control over his state as by idealistic considerations. Temporarily forced to flee from the federal armies, Carranza and his "cabinet" established their headquarters in Piedras Negras, across the Rio Grande from Eagle Pass, Texas.[19]

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[19]González Ramírez, Las Ideas - La Violencia, 375-81; "Decreto de la Legislatura del Estado de Coahuila por el que se desconoce Victoriano Huerta, February 19, 1913," and "Plan de Guadalupe, 26 de Marzo 1913," González Ramírez, Planes Politicos y otros documentos, 134, 137-40; Juan Barragán Rodríguez, Historia del Ejército y de la Revolución Constitucionalista (2 vols.; México, D.F.: Talleres de la Editorial Stylo, 1946), I, 63-100; Robert E. Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 1914-1915 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1960), 8-11; Kenneth J. Grieb, "The Causes of the Carranza Rebellion: A Re-interpretation," The Americas, XXV (July, 1968), 28-32. The main object of contention between Huerta and Carranza was the disposition of irregular state troops. These troops, the remnants of Madero's revolutionary armies, were kept under control of the state governor, but Carranza wanted the federal government to pay their expenses. Huerta refused unless they were brought under direct control of the government in Mexico City. Carranza had also quarreled over this matter

In the northwestern state of Sonora, Governor José M. Maytorena also refused to recognize the Huerta government. As in the case of Coahuila, the paramount issue was state sovereignty, and, again, Huerta refused to make concessions. Maytorena, however, was reluctant to declare himself in open rebellion, and, when he hedged, the state legislature pressured him into taking a leave-of-absence. On March 5, after he had crossed the border into Arizona in temporary exile, the Sonoran Legislature named Ignacio L. Pesquiera governor and declared the state to be in rebellion against the Huerta regime. The Sonorans quickly linked their fortunes to the Constitutionalist cause and acknowledged Carranza as their First Chief.

The Sonoran revolt, however, was soon dominated by Alvaro Obregón, the commander of the state's military forces. In 1913, Obregón was still a relatively obscure figure, but he was to become the ablest military leader of the revolution and one of the dominant political figures of the 1920's. At age thirty-three, he was a slender, strikingly handsome man. Like Pesquiera and the other leaders of the Sonoran revolt, Obregón came from a ranchero (middle-class farmer) background. More than any other revolutionary leader, he was a pragmatist. Although he was

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with President Madero before he was deposed. See Miguel Alessio Robles, Historia Politica de la Revolución (3d. ed.; México, D.F.: Ediciónes Botas, 1946), 24-25.

no radical, when circumstances dictated he did not shrink from using the language of a radical demagogue in enticing the lower classes into the revolutionary armies. Within weeks of the outset of the Sonoran revolt, his forces controlled the border towns and the capital, Hermosillo.[20]

In the north-central state of Chihuahua, the revolution coalesced around Francisco (Pancho) Villa. Possibly the most colorful and controversial of all the revolutionary leaders, he was born Doroteo Arango and adopted the name Pancho Villa after becoming an outlaw. The origin of his outlawry is uncertain; the most popular legend of the day claimed that he had slain the son of an hacendado (owner of a large plantation or ranch) who had ravished his sister. Joining the Maderistas in 1910, he proved his worth in battle and was commissioned a colonel in the revolutionary army. Given an opportunity to live a respectable life by Madero, he was probably the only

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[20]González Ramírez, Las Ideas - La Violencia, 247, 381-87; Barragán Rodriguez, Historia . . . de la Revolución Constitucionalista, I, 131-51; "Decreto del Congresso del Estado de Sonora por el que se desconoce a Victoriano Huerta," and "Acta de la Conferencia, 18 de Abril 1913," Planes Políticos y otros documentos, 135-36, 145-47; Alberto Morales Jiminez, "Alvaro Obregón," Hombres de la Revolución Mexicana (México, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Estudios de la Revolución Mexicana, 1960), 183-84; Ernest Gruening, Mexico and Its Heritage (New York and London: The Century Co., 1928), 97; Lesley Byrd Simpson, Many Mexicos (3d. ed., rev.; Berkley, Calif: University of California Press, 1964), 271-72; John W. F. Dulles, Yesterday In Mexico: A Chronicle of the Revolution, 1919-1936 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961), 4-6.

revolutionary leader who truly revered the memory of the fallen president. To Villa everything was personal and concrete; therefore, his revolt was prompted by hatred of Huerta and a desire to avenge the death of Madero. -No ideologue, he reveled in the camaraderie of the army camp and in leading men in battle. Stocky in build, he was an earthy, passionate, and robust man. He inspired fear and loyalty among his followers. In return, he was fiercely loyal to his men. He was Mexican machismo (virility or manliness) incarnate. He also declared his allegiance to Carranza but, for all practical purposes, remained an independent force.[21]

Victoriano Huerta had to contend with all of these revolutionary forces, and, ultimately, so did Woodrow Wilson, as his non-recognition policy drew him into the

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[21]González Ramírez, Las Ideas - La Violencia, 387-88; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . de la Revolución Constitucionalista, I, 229-40; Haldeen Braddy, Cock of the Walk: The Legend of Pancho Villa (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1955), 1-31, 90-101; Martín Luis Guzmán, Memoirs of Pancho Villa, trans. Virginia H. Taylor (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965), 3-4, 90-103; Francisco R. Alamada, La Revolución en el Estado de Chihuahua (2 vols.; México, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Historicos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1965), II, 25-32. Pancho Villa had a personal reason to dislike Huerta. In April and May, 1912, Villa and his irregulars had served under the general in a campaign designed to crush the Orozco rebellion. When the two quarreled over the ownership of an expropriated horse, Huerta charged Villa with insubordination and ordered him summarily shot. Already standing before the firing squad, Villa's life was spared by order of President Madero, and he was transferred to Mexico City for trial. He escaped from prison and made his way to El Paso, Texas. Although an exile, he remained grateful to Madero for having saved his life,

the Mexican imbroglio. Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson, meanwhile, continued to push for recognition, insisting that Huerta was the only man who could pacify Mexico. He also pointed up the possible consequences of a delay in recognition: the rebels would be encouraged, the civil war prolonged, and the toll of American lives and damage to their property much greater.[22] Such arguments were hardly well calculated to impress the president. As he told one of his advisors: "I am President of the whole United States and not merely of a few property holders in the Republic of Mexico."[23]

The President would gladly have recalled Ambassador Wilson, but sending a replacement to Mexico City would have constituted diplomatic recognition of the Huerta regime. The ambassador, therefore, was studiously ignored in Washington; but the Administration could not ignore charges leveled against him by Robert H. Murray, Mexican correspondent for the New York World. Beginning on March 7, the World printed a series of Murray's articles, presenting a

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while he kindled a personal hatred for Huerta. See Ross, Francisco I. Madero, 266-67.

[22]Wilson to State Department, April 9, 25, and May 15, 1913, General Records of the Department of State, National Archives, RG 59, 812.00/7066, 7273, 7652; hereinafter documents from the State Department 812.00 (Internal Affairs of Mexico) file will be cited only by the specific document number preceded by a slash.

[23]Rear Admiral Gary T. Grayson, Woodrow Wilson: An Intimate Memoir (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), 30.

somewhat distorted exposé of Ambassador Wilson's role in the Decena Tragica. President Wilson already disagreed fundamentally with the views of his official representative in Mexico; now, Murray charged that the ambassador had helped instigate the Huerta coup and was largely responsible for the downfall of Madero.[24]

For weeks thereafter, President Wilson pondered the situation, his inexperience in foreign affairs denying him satisfactory answers. He discussed the problem with his cabinet and came to the conclusion that they all lacked trustworthy information upon which to base a policy. During the course of the cabinet meeting of April 18, the advisability of sending "a confidential man" to Mexico to "study the situation and get at the exact facts" was one of the topics of discussion.[25] Having previously utilized the services of a special agent to gather information in Philippine Islands, Wilson decided to follow the same course in Mexico.[26] On April 19, the day after the cabinet

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[24]New York World, March 7-13, 1913. Later Murray expanded his original exposé into a series of magazine articles. See "Huerta and the Two Wilsons," Harper's Weekly, LXII (March 25-April 29, 1916), 301-303, 341-42, 364-65, 402-404, 434-36, 466-69.

[25]E. David Cronon (ed.), The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, 1913-1921 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), 43.

[26]Baker, Woodrow Wilson, IV, 455; Roy Watson Curry, "Woodrow Wilson and Philippine Policy," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLI (December, 1954), 436. Even before taking office, Wilson despatched Professor Henry J. Ford, a former Princeton colleague, on a fact-finding mission to

discussed the matter, the President pecked out a letter on his portable typewriter, requesting the services of his first special agent to Mexico.

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the Phillipines. Ford began reporting his findings in April, 1913.

CHAPTER II

SUSPICIONS CONFIRMED

Wilson chose a friend, journalist William Bayard Hale, to be his first fact-finding agent to Mexico. Forty-four years old in 1913, Hale was tall, slender, and dark, with thick black eyebrows that met above the bridge of his nose and gave him a devilish appearance. A native of Indiana, he had been educated for the ministry at Episcopal Theological Seminary in Cambridge, Massachusetts, after first studying at Boston University and Harvard. On ordination in 1893, he became rector of a church in Middleboro, Massachusetts, but his influence soon extended beyond his parish. Urging all Christians to be as revolutionary as Christ, he reflected the outlook of the Social Gospel movement in his articles in Arena magazine and in his book, The New Obedience.[1]

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[1]Victor Rosewater, "William Bayard Hale," Dictionary of American Biography, ed. Allen Johnson, et. al. (22 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928-1958), VIII, 112; "William Bayard Hale," National Cyclopedia of American Biography (50 vols.; New York: James T. White & Co., 1898-1968), XV, 182; "William Bayard Hale," Who's Who In America, 1916-1917, Vol. IX, 1036; New York Times, August 25, 1895, March 22, 1897. Hale's reform ideas resembled those of Henry George. He believed that the land-holding system of the United States promoted an inequitable distribution of wealth and should be revised.

After building a new church for his congregation, Hale left the parish to engage in university extension work in Europe, and in 1895 lectured at Oxford University. Upon his return to the United States, he took a parish in Ardmore, Pennsylvania. Dissatisfied with the confinements of parish preaching, he again took to the road in 1900 and stumped the West for Democratic presidential hopeful William Jennings Bryan. Although he retained his clerical orders for another eight years, Hale abandoned the active ministry in 1901 for a career in journalism.

During the first few years in his new profession, Hale served on the editorial staffs of Cosmopolitan and Current Literature, then as special correspondent for the New York World, before becoming managing editor of the Philadelphia Public Ledger. Moving to the New York Times in 1907, he took an assignment that gained him national recognition. He spent a week in the White House with President Theodore Roosevelt and wrote a series of articles depicting the everyday life of the chief executive. The articles were assembled in book form in 1908 under the title, A Week in the White House With Theodore Roosevelt. Even before the book was published, Hale went abroad for a second time as the Times' Paris correspondent. Returning to the United

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A Photograph of Hale as he appeared in 1913 may be found in "Mediation As A Remedy for Mexico," Literary Digest, XLVII (August 9, 1913), 194.

States after a year's service in Europe, he took a position as associate editor and feature writer for The World's Work.[2]

The World's Work, which owner-editor Walter Hines Page, had dedicated to promoting democratic ideals,[3] gave Hale an opportunity to promote social and political reforms. Between 1910 and 1913, he contributed thirty-four articles to The World's Work, making him one of the most prolific journalists of the Progressive Era.[4] Muckraker Ray Stannard Baker characterized Hale as a "brilliant journalist."[5] Through his association with Page, who was championing Woodrow Wilson for the Presidency, Hale was

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[2]Rosewater, "William Bayard Hale," D.A.B., VIII, 112; "William Bayard Hale," National Cyclopedia of American Biography, XV, 182; "William Bayard Hale," Who's Who in America, 1916-1917, IX, 1036.

[3]Burton J. Hendricks, The Life and Letters of Walter Hines Page (3 vols.; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1922-1925), I, 69-72.

[4]Notable among Hale's articles were "The Speaker or the People," XIX (April, 1910), 12805-12, in which he defended the House "insurgents" in their attempt to check the power of conservative Speaker Joseph G. (Uncle Joe) Cannon; "A Dramatic Decade of History," XXI (January, 1911), 3855-68, in which he catalogued the progressive reforms of the first decade of the 20th century; and his favorable characterizations of progressive governors Robert M. La Follette of Wisconsin, Woodrow Wilson of New Jersey, and Judson Harmon of Ohio in successive issues, XXII (May, June, July, 1911), 14339-52, 14446-59, 14591-99.

[5]Baker, Woodrow Wilson, IV, 243. Baker also indicated that he thought Hale "tempermentally unfitted" for the mission to Mexico.

called upon to write a biography of the New Jersey governor. The flattering account, which ran serially for six issues beginning in October, 1911, was so well received by Wilson that it was adopted in book form as the official campaign biography in the 1912 presidential race.[6] After the election victory, moreover, Hale edited some of Wilson's speeches which were published and widely read under the title, The New Freedom.[7]

Being eminently Christian, and having given ample evidence that his views were in tune with Wilson's New Freedom, Hale was a logical choice to serve the Administration in some capacity. Adding to his otherwise meager qualifications for a mission to Mexico—he did not even speak Spanish—was the fact that he had seen much of Latin America first hand. In the summer of 1912, as a member of the journalist entourage, Hale accompanied Secretary of State Philander C. Knox on a tour of the Caribbean and

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[6]"Woodrow Wilson: A Biography," XXII, 14940-53; XXIII, 64-76, 229-34, 297-310, 466-71, 522-23. The campaign biography was published under the title, Woodrow Wilson: The Story of His Life (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1912). Thereafter, Hale often referred to himself as Wilson's biographer.

[7]In the introduction to the book, which is accepted as an epitome of Wilson's political philosophy, Wilson stated: "I did not write this book at all. It is the result of the editorial literary skill of Mr. William Bayard Hale, who put together here in their right sequences the more suggestive portions of my campaign speeches." See Woodrow Wilson, The New Freedom (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1913), vii.

Central America. On the eve of the opening of the Panama Canal, Knox had undertaken the tour as a means of re-establishing good relations with all the Caribbean and Central American republics and to offer them assistance in putting their fiscal affairs in order.

A deep sense of Anglo-Saxon superiority and responsibility pervaded Hale's accounts of the tour. He found particularly repulsive the culture of the Negro population in Haiti, and thought the racially mixed population of Central America incapable of maintaining stable political conditions without outside assistance. He suggested that nations outside the Western Hemisphere, especially Germany, would be willing to perform the service, but the Monroe Doctrine restrained them. The United States, therefore, should take the responsibility. Never explicit about how his country should pursue the task, he did, however, laud the results of the American customs receivership in Santo Domingo; on the other hand, he suggested that mere loans would only encourage revolutions by perpetuating unpopular governments.[8]

Such attitudes were clearly in keeping with the goals of Wilsonian diplomacy and must have been a source of

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[8]William Bayard Hale, "With the Knox Mission to Central America," The World's Work, XXIV (June, July, 1912), 179-93, 323-36; "Our Danger in Central America," ibid., XXIV (August, 1912), 443-51.

comfort to the President as he typed out the letter requesting Hale to undertake a tour of Central and South America, "ostensibly on your own hook," in order "to find out just what is going on down there."[9] With possible military coups brewing in other Central American republics, Wilson obviously meant for Hale's inspection to cover several nations. As it turned out, he visited only Mexico. He apparently was given no written instructions, but an examination of his reports from Mexico reveals the purpose of his mission: to investigate fully the activities and attitudes of Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson—especially to determine the validity of the rumors that the ambassador had been involved in the overthrow of Madero—and to judge the legality and stability of Huerta's provisional government and its ability to restore peace in Mexico. Accepting the mission, Hale put his personal affairs in order, drew $2500 from the President's secret contingent fund, and sailed for Mexico by steamer on May 15.[10]

That Hale's mission was meant to be confidential was evidenced by the manner in which he reported his findings to the President. The special agent sent telegrams and

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[9]Woodrow Wilson to William Bayard Hale, April 19, 1913, Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress, Series III, Letterbook 2.

[10]Hale to Wilson, May 3, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 93; William Bayard Hale's expense account and itinerary, ibid., Series II, Box 101.

letters to one F. A. Muschenheim, a resident (whether real or fictitious the records do not reveal) of the Hotel Astor in New York City. The messages were forwarded to the Washington residence of Ben G. Davis, Chief Clerk of the State Department. Notes to Hale were also routed through the New York intermediary.[11] As a cover, also, the State Department issued a press release, coincident with Hale's departure for Mexico, to the effect that the President did not take seriously the charges being leveled at Ambassador Wilson and that no investigation of his activities was necessary.[12]

Despite these precautions, the persistent rumors of an investigation of Ambassador Wilson's activities, plus the arrival in the Mexican capital of a known friend of President Wilson, caused considerable speculation concerning the purpose of Hale's visit. Being a distinguished journalist, he was called to speak at a dinner honoring him at the exclusive Jockey Club. In the course of his address, he attempted to squelch the rumors, assuring the

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[11]The Hotel Astor was Hale's residence before leaving for Mexico. He probably sent ciphered messages to the Hotel Astor. Neither the Wilson Papers nor the State Department records contain a receipt indicating that Hale definitely was provided with a copy of the State Department code book. Other agents signed receipts upon receiving a copy, but Henry Lane Wilson later insisted that Hale did possess a copy. See New York World, July 27, 1913.

[12]New York Times, May 18, 1913; Mexican Herald (Mexico City), May 19, 1913.

gathering that he was merely collecting data for a series of magazine articles. But the special agent fanned the flames of rumor when he called upon Francisco de la Barra, the Minister of Foreign Relations. De la Barra eased the speculation by announcing that he and Hale were just renewing an old friendship. Although de la Barra did not say so, it is quite possible that the two had met earlier in Washington, while de la Barra served there as ambassador from Mexico.[13]

As Hale went about gathering information, the nature of his inquiries was bound to stimulate curiosity. Robert H. Murray, Ambassador Wilson's nemesis, noted in his column in the New York World "that everyone, especially the Government officials and the friends of the American Ambassador, are deeply interested in finding out what brought Hale to Mexico." Commenting on the secrecy that shrouded Hale's activities, the reporter added that "compared to the discreet three-ply silence he [Hale] has maintained, . . . the proverbial reticence of the clam is verbal fireworks."[14] Because of his reticence, Hale was able to come

[13]Mexican Herald, June 3, 6, 1913; "The Week: Mexico," Independent, LXXIV (June 5, 1913), 1310. One historian suggests that Hale revealed his presence in Mexico City, hence the nature of his mission, by speaking at the Jockey Club. Quite the contrary, his speech at the club was designed to cover his real purpose for being in Mexico. See George J. Rausch, Jr., "Poison-pen Diplomacy: Mexico, 1913," The Americas, XXIV (January, 1968), 274.

[14]New York World, June 23, 1913.

and go from his residence in the Hotel Iturbide with little notice being paid to his actions.

In carrying out his confidential inquiries, Hale established numerous contacts in Mexico City. Speaking no Spanish, he naturally sought out Americans who were willing to provide him with information. E. N. Brown, president of the Mexican National Railway, who maintained intimate relations with the Huerta government, provided Hale with details of the government's fiscal transactions and the activities of foreign concessionaires. The special agent also found a confidant in the American Consul-General, Arnold Shanklin, who, for some time, had been at odds with Ambassador Wilson. From the embassy staff itself, Hale enlisted a willing informer in Luis D'Antin, a clerk-interpreter. Another of the ambassador's enemies, reporter Robert H. Murray, also provided information. From among American business interests, Hale befriended J. N. Galbraith, the agent of oilman Henry Clay Pierce, and C. A. Hamilton, a mine operator. His despatches also reveal that he made acquaintances of numerous middle-class Americans, who operated small businesses in Mexico City.[15]

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[15]Hale did not reveal the sources of information for each report, but in scattered passages of his numerous despatches he identified the above informants. See Hale to State Department, June 3, 18, July 12, 24, August 5, 1913/7798-1/2, 23616, 23626, 23632, 23639; Hale to State Department, June 12, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 94; Memorandum (by Hale), September 28, 1913, ibid., Box 97. Except for document no. 7798-1/2, Hale's despatches were withheld from the regular State Department files.

The fact that so many of Hale's informants were known enemies of Ambassador Wilson ultimately caused Boaz Long, the Chief of the State Department's Division of Latin American Affairs, to question the reliability of the agent's information. Bryan and Wilson, however, had complete confidence in their agent, and when Long brought the matter to their attention, he was ignored.[16] They were not entirely unjustified, because Hale did solicit a variety of viewpoints. He maintained confidential relations with Foreign Minister de la Barra, and, although he never mentioned them by name, he indicated that he communicated regularly with other members of Huerta's cabinet. Two notable politicians, conservative Manuel Calero and liberal Jesus Flores Magón, who collaborated with the provisional government, also provided information. Hale also interviewed Felix Díaz's private secretary. Last, but not least, he conferred with Henry Lane Wilson, who, despite his veiled suspicion of Hale, was candid and openly discussed his relations with both the Madero and Huerta governments.[17]

They were kept in the private possession of Secretary of State Bryan until they were released to the Index Bureau in March, 1920. Therefore, they do not appear in the proper chronological sequence with other documents that arrived at the State Department at the same time, but may be found mixed with documents dated March, 1920.

[16]Long to Bryan, August 22, 1913/17669.

[17]Hale to State Department, June 3, July 12, 24, August 5, 1913/23616, 23626, 23632, 23639; Hale to State

One June 3, after nine days of investigation, Hale began reporting his findings to the President.[18] He noted that the prevailing opinion in Mexico City was that Huerta's

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Department, June 12, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 94; Alberto Noel to Felix Díaz, June 30, 1913, enclosed in Henry Lane Wilson to Woodrow Wilson, July 1, 1913, ibid.; Memorandum (by Hale), September 28, 1913, ibid., Box 97; Henry Lane Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes in Mexico, Belgium, and Chile (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1927), 305-306. Alberto Noel, Felix Díaz's private secretary, reported his interview with Hale to his employer, who passed the letter on to Ambassador Wilson. Noel's letter contained a highly critical characterization of Hale, which the ambassador sought to use to discredit the special agent. By the time the letter was placed in his hands, Ambassador Wilson suspected Hale of being the President's representative.

For the nature of the political affiliations of Manuel Calero and Jesus Flores Magón, see Cumberland, The Mexican Revolution, 10-11, 153-154, 196; James D. Cockroft, Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1913 ("Institute of Latin American Studies, The University of Texas: Latin American Monographs," No. 14; Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), 91-98, 179, 185, 212, 220. Calero had served as Madero's Minister of Foreign Relations and Flores Magón had served as Minister of Gobernación. Both supported the Huerta regime.

[18] In a recently published article, Kenneth Grieb charges that Hale went to Mexico determined to find Huerta and Henry Lane Wilson guilty of the charges that had been brought against them, and that he "commenced reporting immediately after his arrival indicating that he failed to conduct an investigation before formulating his recommendations." See "Reginald Del Valle: A California Diplomat's Sojourn in Mexico," California Historical Society Quarterly, XLVII (December, 1968), 321. An itinerary of Hale's movements (which the above author did not cite) located in the Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 101, reveals that Hale reached Mexico City on May 24 and did not file his first report until June 3, nine days after his arrival. See Hale to State Department, June 3, 1913/23616. Although this report does not reveal the sources of Hale's information (the only informant mentioned was Foreign Minister de la Barra), Hale had ample time to conduct an investigation before filing his report. The note itself was not a definitive statement of his findings but merely a brief telegraphic message relating his first impressions.

government was stable and that his triumph over the rebels was inevitable. The American colony, he added, was virtually unanimous in its recommendations for recognition of the provisional government. Hale did not think the confidence in the Huerta regime was justified. He noted that the Associated Press reports and the government's "official" versions of the campaigns against the rebels differed considerably. A study of the map and wire service reports convinced Hale that Huerta's grip on the nation was slipping. By July 9, he had investigated fully enough to report on the condition of the country, state by state. He concluded that Huerta controlled and was able to maintain order in no more than one-third of the national territory.[19]

Hale had been briefed by Wilson and Bryan, and he doubtless had some preconceived notions about the Mexican situation; but there seems to be little reason to suppose that he went to Mexico with his mind already made up. In his recently published book, The United States and Huerta, 80, Grieb also charges that Hale "avoided diplomats and government officials, seeking only individuals who could provide information that corroborated his own convictions." As pointed out above, there seems to be little basis for this charge.

[19]Hale to State Department, June 3, 6, 16, 25, 1913/23616, 23618, 23621; Memorandum on Affairs in Mexico (by Hale), July 9, 1913/8203; Hale to State Department, June 12, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 94. Hale's estimates of Huerta's control of the national territory were essentially correct. See Vera Estañol, La Revolución Mexicana, 326-27; González Ramírez, Las Ideas - La Violencia, 403-405.

More importantly, Hale also reported that Huerta's dominance of his own government and control of the capital city were rather tenuous. He cited numerous turnovers in Huerta's cabinet as evidence of dissension in the government. Influential men, he discovered, were openly discussing the propriety of asking Huerta to resign.[20]

The most impressive evidence the American agent marshalled against the usurper concerned the financial condition of the provisional government. Huerta had inherited a near empty treasury and a tremendous national debt. Because the nation was in turmoil and the means of securing revenue was intermittently interrupted, Huerta needed large foreign loans to sustain the government until the nation was pacified. In the early days of June, the government had announced the negotiation of a substantial loan from an international banking syndicate, and it was widely assumed that this loan would enable Huerta to mount a decisive military campaign against the rebels.[21] Hale, however, pointed out the fact that less than half of the loan had been subscribed immediately, the syndicate merely taking an option to supply the remainder six months later.

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[20]Hale to State Department, June 14, 22, 25, July 8, 1913/23617, 23620, 23621, 23625; Memorandum on Affairs in Mexico (by Hale), July 9, 1913/8203. For the nature of Huerta's intragovernmental conflicts, see Rausch, "Victoriano Huerta," 96-109; Sherman and Greenleaf, Victoriano Huerta, 101-106.

[21]New York Times, June 2, 3, 1913, p. 1.

Most of what Huerta did receive, Hale explained, went to pay off already matured bonds, while only a fraction remained for government operating expenses. Hale added, moreover, that E. N. Brown of the Mexican National Railway had confided that the remaining options would never be filled. Within six months, Brown feared, the Huerta government would be bankrupt. The crowd of politicians around Huerta, the American railroad man told Hale, had not yet abandoned the government only because they were intent upon looting it of as much as possible before it fell.[22]

Hale was alarmed by the anti-American sentiment in Mexico City. Particularly ominous, he believed, was the attempt of government officials to blame the United States for Mexico's declining economic fortunes. Wilson's refusal to grant diplomatic recognition to the provisional government, the charges ran, encouraged the revolutionaries and discouraged foreign investors from coming to Mexico's aid. While there was much truth in such allegations, Hale also noted that the Huertistas falsely charged that

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[22]Hale to State Department, June 22, 1913/23620; Memorandum on Affairs in Mexico (by Hale), July 9, 1913/8203. Hale's estimates on the true nature of the loan were essentially correct. He did not state exact figures, but the total amount of the loan was £16,000,000, of which only £6,000,000 was contracted immediately, with options being given to supply the remainder later. See Edgar Turlingon, Mexico and Her Foreign Creditors (New York: Columbia University Press, 1930), 248-51; Jan Bazánt, Historia de la deuda exterior de México, 1823-1946 (México, D.F.: El Colegio de México, 1968), 175.

the ultimate design of American foreign policy was to reduce Mexico to anarchy in order to justify military intervention and possible annexation. This anti-American propaganda, the special agent believed, was designed to divert the public's attention from the government's poorly managed military effort against the rebels.[23]

From Hale's point of view, the most disturbing aspect of this anti-American propaganda was its effect on the approximately three thousand American middle-class businessmen who lived in Mexico City. This element of the American colony, which, according to Hale, constituted "a strong force making for order and decency," had stayed with their businesses through the bad times of the Revolution of 1910 and the Decena Tragica, but now felt their presence threatened by the wave of anti-Americanism. The special agent pointed out that these people were not great capitalists "of the Standard Oil or Guggenheim type, with employees who could readily leave the country," but were "Americans of our own type with our own sentiments and ideals. They live in American houses; they practice and hold American standards of morality and rectitude . . .

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[23]Hale to State Department, July 12, 17, 1913/23626, 23629. Anti-Americanism did indeed run high in Mexico City. The Huerta press was full of charges such as the ones Hale had reported. See Mexican Herald, July 7-11, 1913. A champion of American business interests in Mexico and a supporter of the Huerta regime, the Herald, an English language newspaper, almost daily printed translations of Huertista editorials condemning the Wilson Administration.

To ask these people to withdraw from Mexico," Hale concluded, "would be to push civilization backwards."[24] It was just such people that Wilson's New Freedom was designed to protect and aid at home. Reading Hale's despatches, the President must have wondered if he could do less for such Americans abroad, especially when they were apparently being intimidated by the likes of Victoriano Huerta.

Huerta himself Hale characterized as "an ape-like old man, of almost pure Indian blood. He may almost be said to subsist on alcohol. Drunk or only half-drunk (he is never sober), he never loses a certain shrewdness."[25] The shrewdness that Hale went on to describe was the cunning of a Machiavellian. The American agent painted a sinister picture of Huerta coming to President Madero on the first day of the Decena Tragica and offering his services in the defense of legal authority. Once in the President's trust, the old general had cynically allowed Felix Díaz and the other leaders of the cuartelado (military revolt) to make overtures. Once he had extracted favorable terms, including the office of provisional president for himself, Huerta joined the conspirators in overthrowing the constitutional

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[24]Hale to State Department, July 2, 1913/23623; Memornadum on Affairs in Mexico (by Hale), July 9, 1913/8203.

[25]Memorandum on Affairs in Mexico (by Hale), July 9, 1913/8203.

government and murdering Madero.[26]

Just as fond of moralizing as his president, Hale concluded that extending diplomatic recognition to a government thus established would, in effect, be an endorsement of "treason and assassination" and an "abandonment of all the principles by which social order is maintained in a civilized country. European powers, with their own clouded histories," he added:

> can afford perhaps to connive at the overthrowing [of] lawful authority by murder, but surely the United States, especially if it would wield any moral influence in Latin America, can afford anything sooner than give its countenance to savage contempt for constitutional government. (author's punctuation).[27]

Although Wilson himself had articulated similar sentiments earlier, Hale's despatches, arriving in Washington when they did, served to bolster the President at a time when his resolve not to recognize Huerta was wavering. He was under pressure from several sources to at least grant conditional recognition. Several members of his cabinet, along with his close personal friend Colonel Edward House and the eminent Chief Counselor of the State Department, John Bassett Moore, insisted that de facto recognition would carry with it no moral acceptance of Huerta and his methods.[28]

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[26]Hale to State Department, June 18, 1913/7798-1/2.

[27]Hale to State Department, June 3, 1913/23616.

[28]House to Wilson, May 6, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 93; John Bassett Moore (enclosing Memorandum for

Businessmen, such as James Speyer of the Wall Street banking firm of Speyer and Company, which held $10,000,000 in Mexican bonds, beseeched the President to clarify his Mexican policy. Wilson gave one proposal from the business world close scrutiny, mainly because it was endorsed by an old friend, former Princeton classmate Cleveland H. Dodge. Early in May, Julius Kruttschnit, chairman of the board of directors of the Southern Pacific Railroad, approached Wilson through Colonel House with a plan of conditional recognition. The plan had already been approved by several other large firms with interests in Mexico, including Phelps Dodge & Company, the Greene Cananea Copper Company, and Edward L. Doheny's Mexican Petroleum Company. The brainchild of Judge J. D. Haff of Kansas City, the plan called for Wilson to accord Huerta diplomatic recognition, with the provisos that the old general should call free and impartial elections as soon as possible in the states he controlled and that the Constitutionalists should suspend hostilities and hold impartial elections in the states they controlled. Both sides would then support the president thus elected. That Wilson gave this proposal serious consideration is evidenced by the fact that he drafted instructions to Ambassador Wilson embodying the

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the President) to Bryan, May 14, 1913/8378; Cronon, The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, 42-44; David F. Houston, Eight Years With Wilson's Cabinet (2 vols.; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1926), I, 69.

Haff plan.[29]

These plans, as they matured in May, gave promise of a more positive Mexican policy. Apparently awaiting news from his special agent in Mexico City, Wilson hesitated before sending the instructions to his ambassador. Then in early June, when Hale's despatches began pouring in, painting such a dismal future for Huerta's government, Wilson dropped the plan of conditional recognition. Instead he adopted an alternate proposal, also presented by Julius Kruttschnitt, which omitted conditional recognition and asked only that the Administration use its good offices to arrange elections in Mexico and mediate the differences between the provisional government and the Constitutionalists. President Wilson, in fact, sent a note to Henry Lane Wilson embodying this proposal as a guide for the Ambassador to follow in his relations with the Huerta government.[30]

Wilson and Bryan never doubted the accuracy of Hale's reports. Such unqualified acceptance was not justified. Hale was a man of unquestionable integrity, and he was diligent in his efforts to make a full investigation.

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[29] Baker, Woodrow Wilson, IV, 245-53; Link, The New Freedom, 351-52.

[30] Ibid.; State Department to H. L. Wilson, June 15, 1913/7743. President Wilson went further than the Kruttschnitt proposal, insisting that Huerta pledge himself not to be a candidate for president in the arranged elections.

But his superficial knowledge of Mexican politics and his sense of Anglo-Saxon superiority betrayed him into making some false assumptions. True enough, there was considerable conflict within the provisional government, but this was hardly evidence of weakness on Huerta's part. The numerous changes in the cabinet resulted from Huerta's determination to eliminate the Felicistas, whom he had been forced by the Pact of the Embassy to include in his original government. In fact, Huerta was strengthening his hand by replacing the deposed Felicistas with his own loyal followers. His campaigns against the rebels were, indeed, languishing, and he did not control most of the national territory; but Huerta did hold the important rail centers—the keys to military dominance of the nation—as well as most of the centers of dense population. Nor was the old general entirely unhappy over the course of the civil war. Prolonging the war for the time being provided him with a pretext for remaining in power. Although the international loan had netted the government very little, it had relieved the immediate financial crisis. Thus, at the time when Hale was prophesying doom for the provisional government, Huerta's strength was on the rise.[31]

Maintenance of this strength, even Huerta realized, was dependent upon the stabilizing influence that diplomatic

[31]Rausch, "Victoriano Huerta," 96-98; Sherman and Greenleaf, Huerta, 105-106; Vera Estañol, La Revolución Mexicana, 318-29.

recognition from the United States would provide.[32] The importance of Hale's early despatches, regardless of how accurate, was that they re-enforced Wilson's original image of Huerta, hardened his Puritan will, and eliminated any possibility of diplomatic recognition for the usurper. This, in turn, prolonged Huerta's difficulties.

Hale's revelations on the activities of Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson were equally influential. Hale wasted no time in confirming President Wilson's worst fears concerning his official representative in the Mexican capital. In his first despatch to Washington, Hale revealed that the ambassador was a "vain busybody [of] highly nervous temperament increased by indulgence not scandalous, which slight frame is not equal to." Even more revealing, the special agent insisted that "it is no secret that [the] fall [of] Madero was hastened by Ambassador Wilson."[33]

Two weeks later, the President received Hale's elaborately detailed thirty-three page account of the Decena Tragica. For the most part, his narrative of the facts was accurate, but he overemphasized Ambassador Wilson's involvement. He correctly pointed out that Wilson looked upon Madero with open contempt and had been discourteous to the Mexican President on more than one occasion. Hale was accurate in his charges that the ambassador harried

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[32]Huerta, Memórias de Victoriano Huerta, 93-94.

[33]Hale to State Department, June 3, 1913/23616.

Madero throughout the Decena, blaming him for the violence and trying to force his resignation. The agent also noted correctly that, on more than one occasion, Wilson claimed to be speaking for the entire diplomatic corps, when only two or three ministers agreed with him.[34]

In reporting Wilson's involvement, however, Hale often allowed his own righteous indignation and loathing for the ambassador to cloud his judgment. Without justification he concluded that "without the countenance of the American Ambassador given to Huerta's proposal to betray the President, the revolt would have failed."[35] Such a supposition did not do justice to the conspiratorial talents of Felix Díaz and Victoriano Huerta. Although Wilson was forewarned, the two generals carried off their coup without the active involvement of the ambassador. Even had Wilson disapproved

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[34]Hale to State Department, June 18, 1913/7798-1/2; John P. Harrison, "Henry Lane Wilson, El Trágico de la Decena," Historia Mexicana, VI (January-March, 1957), 374-405. The latter citation is a Spanish translation of the first, with notes and editorial comments. Harrison suggests that this document, which was as much an indictment of Huerta as exposé of Henry Lane Wilson's activities, was the decisive factor in preventing the recognition of the Huerta regime. Mexican historian Isidro Fabela, who served as Carranza's Minister of Foreign Relations, accepted Hale's report as prima face evidence of Ambassador Wilson's guilt. See "La Participación de Henry Lane Wilson: Fragmento del informe confidential Enviado al President Woodrow Wilson por su Emisario William Bayard Hale, 18 de Junio 1913," Isidro Fabela y Josefina E. de Fabela (eds.), Documentos Historicos de la Revolución Mexicana, Vol. IX: Revolución y Regimen Maderista (México, D.F.: Editorial Jus, 1965), 187-205.

[35]Hale to State Department, June 18, 1913/7798-1/2.

of their plans, there is no reason to suppose that they would have scrapped them or would have failed to oust Madero.

Hale also contended that "the plan for the immediate settling of a military dictatorship would never have been formed except in the American Embassy."[36] Again, he assumed too much. The provisional government was not as yet a dictatorship,[37] nor was Wilson responsible for creating the Huerta regime. Huerta and Díaz agreed upon the bare bones of the provisional government before they consulted with the ambassador. Wilson's involvement in the coup took place after the arrest of Madero and was confined to the negotiation of the Pact of the Embassy, which merely designated the individuals who would serve in the cabinet and provided for a permanent government to be elected in the future.

Finally, Hale charged that Ambassador Wilson was responsible for the assassination of Madero and Pino Suárez. By his refusal to accept responsibility for their safety,

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[36] Ibid.

[37] Huerta had used the veiled threat of force to keep some of the state governments in line and placed military men in power wherever possible, but the national congress, which had been elected with Madero in 1911, was still functioning and was by no means amenable to all of the provisional president's proposals. His pretensions were also challenged by the Felicistas who remained in the cabinet. See Rausch, "Victoriano Huerta," 97-102; Sherman and Greenleaf, Huerta, 101-102, 105-106, 116-19; Vera Estañol, La Revolución Mexicana, 321-33.

Hale reasoned, the ambassador "might be said to have delivered the men to death."[38] At best Wilson had looked upon Madero's safety with calculated indifference, but to accuse the ambassador of total responsibility for the deposed president's death was a grossly irresponsible statement on the part of Hale.

Grudgingly, Hale admitted that Ambassador Wilson talked freely and candidly of his part in the drama and gave "evidence in every sentence that he believed it to have been the only part humanity and patriotism (alike from the standpoint of Mexico and the United States) allowed him to play." The special agent conceded—and in doing so, largely contradicted his earlier characterization—that it would be "absurd to picture Mr. Wilson as a malicious plotter." Despite such admissions, Hale could not close his report without driving his point home. Again, he exaggerated:

> It cannot but be a course of grief that what is probably the most dramatic story in which an American diplomatic officer has ever been involved, should be a story of sympathy with treason, perfidy and assassination in an assault on constitutional government.

Then, in language calculated to have the greatest effect upon President Wilson, he added:

> . . . it is particularly unfortunate that this should have taken place in a leading country of Latin America, where, if we have moral work to

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[38] Hale to State Department, June 18, 1913/7798-1/2.

> do, it is to discourage violence and uphold law.
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> Trifling, perhaps, in the sum of miseries that have flowed from it, yet not without importance in a way, is the fact that thousands of Mexicans believe that the Ambassador acted on instructions from Washington and look upon his retention under the new President as a mark of approval and blame the United States for the chaos into which the country has fallen.[39]

Clearly this was a call for the President to clarify his Mexican policy, at least by recalling Henry Lane Wilson. President Wilson was indeed moved by the report. Just before departing for a short holiday in New Hampshire, he pecked out a short note to Bryan on his portable typewriter:

> The document from Hale is indeed extraordinary. I should like, upon my return from my little outing, to discuss with you very seriously the necessity of recalling Henry Lane Wilson in one way or another, perhaps merely "for consultation" until we can talk with the man himself.

The Secretary of State fully agreed.[40] Actually they had been moving toward this decision for days. On June 25, approximately a week before Bryan and Wilson received Hale's lengthy letter condemning Ambassador Wilson, Bryan received a telegram from the special agent revealing that

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Wilson to Bryan, July 1, 1913, The Correspondence of Secretary of State Bryan with President Wilson, General Records of the Department of State, National Archives, RG 59; hereinafter cited as Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; Bryan to Wilson, July 3, 1913, ibid.; copies of both in Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 275.

the ambassador had invited Huerta to dine at the embassy. In transmitting a copy to the White House, Bryan scrawled a pencil message across the bottom of the telegram: "What do you think of Huerta dining with Wilson?" The President replied, adding his own pencil note beneath Bryan's: "Think it most seriously unwise. Probably make it worse to interfere." Then, as if in anger and as an afterthought, he scribbled a second note on another part of the page: "I think Wilson should be recalled."[41]

Wilson and Bryan's response to Hale's revelations indicated that their indignation had mounted sufficiently to cause them to take more positive steps against Ambassador Wilson and the Huerta government. But, on July 4, exhausted from his efforts to influence Congress on the tariff and currency questions, President Wilson departed on a ten-day vacation.[42] During his absence no new moves were made. The Administration still did not have a clear-cut Mexican policy. Wilson's temporary reluctance to move more forcefully in Mexican affairs was due to his lack of information concerning the nature of the Constitutionalist revolution in Northern Mexico. Hale's trusted opinions had given him ample reason to believe that Huerta would never establish a regime that he could accept. But, could

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[41]Hale to State Department, June 25, 1913/23621. The pencil notes were scribbled on the White House copy. See Hale to State Department [n.d.], Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 94.

[42]New York Times, July 4, 1913, p. 1.

he expect any better from the rebels? Already another special agent was in the field, attempting to provide the answer to this question.

CHAPTER III

NO ONE WORTHY OF CONSIDERATION

Reginaldo (often anglicized as Reginald) F. Del Valle of Los Angeles was Wilson's second fact-finding agent to Mexico. A long-time political confederate of Bryan, Del Valle was a member of a prestigious old Southern California family, his grandfather having come to the area in 1819 as an officer in the Spanish Army. Remaining in California after Mexico won her independence from Spain, the Del Valle family secured land grants and became substantial ranchers and vintners. Reginaldo, therefore, was reared in comfortable circumstances. He was graduated from Santa Clara University in 1873 and was admitted to the bar four years later. Using his legal career as a stepping-stone to politics, in 1880, at age twenty-five, he was elected to the lower house of the state legislature and, two years later, ran a successful race for the state senate. A lifetime Democrat, he was later unsuccessful in election bids for Congress and lieutenant governor. In 1893 Cleveland offered him the post of ambassador to Chile, but he declined the honor. He supported Bryan in all his presidential bids and backed Wilson's nomination in 1912. At

the time Wilson called him to serve in Mexico, he was a member of the Los Angeles Public Service Commission.[1]

In 1913, at age fifty-eight, Del Valle was grey-haired and mustached. Short and portly, he spoke fluent Spanish and, by appearance and cultural background, was hardly distinguishable from the Mexican leaders he was being sent to observe.[2] But, other than his Spanish-Mexican heritage and his old acquaintance with Bryan, he had no particular qualifications to commend him for the mission. He was not an acknowledged expert on Mexican affairs, and, unlike most of the other agents Wilson and Bryan sent to Mexico, Del Valle did not share their view of the situation south of the border. He had a Spanish patrician's disdain for lower-class Mexicans, particularly those of Indian blood, and his despatches revealed that he had little faith in the

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[1] National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections, 1959-1961 (Ann Arbor, Mich.: J. W. Edwards, Pub., 1962), 588; New York Times, July 19, 27, 1913, II, 2; Los Angeles Times, September 22, 23, 25, 1938. Biographical data on Del Valle is very sketchy and, for the most part, must be gleaned from newspaper reports. His family background is described in the National Union Catalog and his obituary in the Los Angeles Times. The Del Valle Family Manuscripts are located in the Los Angeles Museum of Natural History, but they contain only a few items relating to Reginaldo, none of which refer to his mission to Mexico. The Henry E. Huntington Library of San Marino, California, contains some of Reginald's papers, but they deal almost entirely with his business ventures in the 1920's.

[2] A photograph of Del Valle as he appeared in 1913 may be found in "Mediation As A Remedy for Mexico," Literary Digest, XLVII (August 9, 1913), 194.

workability of democracy among the Mexican people. Wilson and Bryan obviously did not know this at the outset. Only as his mission drew to a close did it become apparent that his sympathies were at variance with those of the President and Secretary of State.

The purpose of Del Valle's mission was supposed to be a secret. He was supplied with a copy of the State Department code book for enciphering his telegraphic messages. As in the case of Hale, his reports were to be addressed to the private address of the Chief Clerk of the State Department instead of going through official channels. A memorandum jotted down by Bryan provided Del Valle with guidelines to follow in making his inquiries:

> 1. It is desirable to know the character, standing and popularity of those who have influence in any community.
> 2. Where is the dissatisfaction with the Government, it is important to know the cause of dissatisfaction, and to what extent there is a concentration of opinion as to cause and agreement as to remedy?
> 3. Are conditions improving or growing worse? This can be determined somewhat by the spirit of hopefulness or feeling of depression?
> 4. What was the real cause of the first revolution, and does the sentiment upon which it was founded still exist?
> 5. What is the situation in respect to land ownership and tenure? Are the conditions satisfactory, and what changes, if any, are contemplated?

Del Valle drew three-thousand dollars from the President's contingent fund, and the Secretary of State provided him with a letter identifying him only as a personal friend traveling in Mexico on professional business and

instructing all American diplomatic and consular officials to accord him every courtesy.[3]

Del Valle's itinerary called for him to go first to the Constitutionalist stronghold in the northwestern state of Sonora, then to make his way eastward across Northern Mexico. In order to gather information from the anti-revolutionary elements, as well as from the revolutionaries, he went first to Tucson, Arizona, where a sizeable community of refugees from Northern Mexico had gathered. Accompanied by his wife and daughter, he arrived in Tucson on June 7.[4] Thus, he began his investigations at about the same time that Hale began reporting his impressions from Mexico City.

From the outset, Del Valle's mission took on a carnival atmosphere. He apparently revealed either to reporters from Los Angeles or to members of the refugee colony the fact that he represented President Wilson, because little secrecy shrouded his activities. The Los Angeles Times anticipated his movements, reporting his presence in Tucson on the very day of his arrival.[5] Refugees, pouring out

[3]Memorandum, [n.d.]; receipts for code book and $3000; letter, To the Diplomatic and Consular Officers of the United States of America, May 31, 1913, enclosed in Bryan to Del Valle, May 31, 1913/20446.

[4]Los Angeles Times, June 7, 1913; Tucson Daily Citizen, June 10, 1913.

[5]Los Angeles Times, June 7, 1913.

their tales of suffering and privation and beseeching the aid of the Wilson Administration, swarmed around him as soon as he debarked from the train. The border newspapers, moreover, identified him without qualification as the special agent of President Wilson.[6]

Garbled versions of Del Valle's purposes began to circulate immediately upon his arrival on the border. The two major Los Angeles dailies—the Times and the Examiner—first created, and the border papers spread, the impression that the Californian had been sent to arrange a truce between the Constitutionalists and the Huerta government.[7] The Los Angeles Times in particular presented Del Valle as a prospective peacemaker. The front page of the June 17 issue bore his photograph, which was encircled by elaborate artwork. Embossed in the lower right corner of the picture was a toga draped Grecian-like female figure—apparently symbolizing liberty—holding a Mexican flag and an olive branch in one hand, while the other released a dove of peace which flew upward toward Del Valle's photograph. The obvious implication to be drawn from the picture was that

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[6]Tucson Daily Citizen, June 10, 1913; Tucson Daily Star, June 10, 1913; Border Vedette (Nogales, Arizona), June 14, 1913; El Paso (Texas) Morning Times, June 10, 1913.

[7]Los Angeles Times, June 10, 1913; Los Angeles Examiner, June 10, 1913; Tucson Daily Citizen, June 11, 1913; Border Vedette, June 14, 1913; El Paso Morning Times, June 20, 1913.

Mexico implored his aid in restoring peace.[8]

Both Los Angeles newspapers were also responsible for originating a rumor that Del Valle would succeed Henry Lane Wilson as Ambassador to Mexico.[9] There may have been a measure of validity to this report. In the early weeks of the Wilson Administration, Del Valle had gone to Washington seeking the ambassadorship.[10] That Bryan may have considered the Californian for the post is evidenced by his remarks to Huerta's Charge d'Affaires in Washington. When the charge discovered that an American was in Northern Mexico interviewing revolutionary leaders, he naturally questioned Bryan concerning the nature of the intruder's activities. Although Bryan denied that Del Valle had any official status at the time, he did reveal that the Californian was "one of the probable candidates for Ambassador to Mexico."[11] Whatever Bryan's intentions, the border press picked up and spread the story until it ultimately

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[8] Los Angeles Times, June 17, 1913.

[9] Ibid., June 7, 1913; Los Angeles Examiner, June 7, 1913.

[10] Upon his return from Mexico in late July, Del Valle revealed to Eastern reporters that he had earlier come to Washington seeking the post of Ambassador to Mexico. See New York Times, July 27, 1913, II, 2.

[11] Encargado de Negocios ad-ínterin a Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, June 12, 1913, Archivo General de la Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, Ramo de la Revolución (hereinafter cited as AGRE), L-E-786, Leg. 28, f. 1-2.

made news in Mexico City.[12]

Del Valle was not as discreet in his public comments as one would expect from a "secret agent." When queried concerning the nature of his visit to Northern Mexico, he did not deny outright that he was an agent of the President, but gave equivocal answers that only served to increase the specualtion. For example, to the reporter of the Los Angeles Times, he commented: "While I am acting in a personal capacity, the fact is that I am simply an instrument of President Wilson and Secretary Bryan."[13] The El Paso Times reported him as saying: "I am not representing the United States government as an official, but as an envoy for the purpose of submitting reports of conditions in Mexico to President Wilson and Secretary Bryan."[14] By involving his wife and daughter—who were invited to a round of parties by the ladies of Tucson and Nogales—in his interviews, Del Valle allowed his mission to take on the air of a social outing.[15]

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[12] Tucson Daily Citizen, June 10, 11, 1913; Border Vedette, June 14, 1913; El Paso Morning Times, June 20, 1913; El Imparcial (Mexico City), June 18, 1913.

[13] Los Angeles Times, June 10, 1913.

[14] El Paso Morning Times, June 20, 1913.

[15] Los Angeles Times, June 14, 1913. The society page of the Times lauded the conduct of the Del Valle women, indicating that their activities had been a smashing social success. The Times also suggested that they had made an excellent impression upon the refugees.

However indiscreet he may have been, Del Valle took his mission quite seriously and, in his own fashion, was a diligent investigator. Between June 7 and 13, he divided his time between Tucson and Nogales, interviewing refugees. Most notable among them were José M. Maytorena, self-exiled governor of the State of Sonora; Felipe Rivera, deposed governor of the State of Sinaloa; and Martín Espinoza, who was still governor of the District of Tepíc. All three professed sympathy for the Constitutionalist cause. Most of the other exiles were middle-to-upper-class property owners, professionals, and merchants. Del Valle referred to them as the "reputable citizens" of Sonora. This group immediately won the Californian's sympathy. They had endured great suffering, Del Valle revealed, and longed for peace, even under Huerta's rule, if that was the surest way to end the chaos in Northern Mexico. They charged that the Constitutionalist armies were composed of the "worst elements" in their state. The refugees grieved that in their absence the rebels were systematically despoiling their property. Should they return to protect their interests, their lives would be endangered. The sale of their confiscated cattle and other moveable property, they further lamented, was providing the revenue to finance the revolutionary war effort.[16]

[16]Del Valle to State Department, June 8, 19, 12, 1913/ 23641, 23642, 23643; Tucson Daily Citizen, June 10, 11, 1913; Border Vedette, June 14, 1913. Governor Rivera

To judge these matters first-hand, Del Valle entered Mexico on June 13, bound for the Sonoran capital, Hermosillo. The Constitutionalist leaders eagerly anticipated his arrival and attempted to make a good impression. Well aware that he represented President Wilson, the rebel leaders had the Californian investigated before he entered their bailiwick. The revolucionaries' Hermosillo newspaper, La Voz de Sonora, sent a reporter to interview Del Valle in Nogales. Overly impressed by the fact that the special agent was of Mexican descent and spoke Spanish fluently, the newspaperman pronounced Del Valle completely sympathetic to the rebel cause.[17] Not surprisingly, therefore, Del Valle was cordially received in Hermosillo. The rebel leaders granted him interviews and allowed him to wander about the city, observing conditions and conversing with the local inhabitants. Encountering no obstacles, he completed his investigation in two days and returned to Tucson on the 16th.[18]

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revealed that Huerta had used police state terrorism in an attempt to extract a profession of loyalty to the provisional government. When he refused to submit, Rivera claimed, he was arrested, but escaped and made his way to Tucson. Governor Espinoza apparently came to the border in order to be beyond Huerta's reach while he made up his mind about his loyalties.

[17]La Voz de Sonora, June 14, 1913, enclosed in Del Valle to State Department, June 17, 1913/23644.

[18]Louis Hostetter (American Consul, Hermosillo) to State Department, June 17, 1913/7862; Del Valle to State Department, June 17, 1913/23644.

After resting a day in Tucson, Del Valle sent his wife and daughter home to Los Angeles, while he proceeded to El Paso, Texas. Arriving there on June 18, he spent two days in conferences with Constitutionalist agents and sympathizers and civic leaders in El Paso and with Huerta's officials across the Rio Grande in government-held Ciudad Juárez. Since the Constitutionalists had destroyed a length of the railroad tracks south of Juárez, Del Valle was unable to travel into the state of Chihuahua.[19]

Denied access to the interior of North-Central Mexico, the special envoy continued his journey along the border until he reached, perhaps, his most important destination, Venustiano Carranza's headquarters in Piedras Negras, Coahuila. Arriving across the border in Eagle Pass, Texas, on June 21, Del Valle crossed the Rio Grande the next day and, with the aid of the American Consul, arranged an interview with Carranza and his staff. With portent of his future relations with the Wilson Administration, Carranza was truculent and uncooperative in his meeting with Del Valle. Extremely nationalistic, the First Chief was hypersensitive to any encroachment upon his independence in directing the course of the Revolution. From the press reports that preceded Del Valle's arrival in

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[19]Del Valle to State Department, June 27, 1913/23648; El Paso Morning Times, June 20, 1913.

Piedras Negras, Carranza could have inferred that the agent's purpose was to infringe upon that independence by attempting to arrange a truce between the Constitutionalists and Huerta's provisional government. So as to accentuate his own official character, the First Chief refused even to speak to the special agent except in the presence of an official of the United States government—in this case, Consul Luther T. Ellsworth. The bearded revolutionary leader absolutely refused to discuss the Mexican political situation and terminated the interview abruptly, with little more than social amenities having been exchanged.[20]

In his report of the incident, Del Valle was at a loss to explain why Carranza was so suspicious. Ignoring the obvious impression the press reports and his own misguided comments might have made, the Californian could not understand how the First Chief got the misinformation that the United States was trying to bind the rebels to a conciliatory arrangement with the provisional government in Mexico City. The special agent conjectured that Carranza was so cautious because he had recently received a representative of General Felix Díaz, who attempted to bind

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[20]Ellsworth to State Department, June 21, 23, 1913/7845 (no document number for June 23); Del Valle to State Department, June 23, 27, 1913/23646, 23648; R. S. Bravo, Consul, Mexico (Eagle Pass) a Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, June 24, 1913, AGRE, L-E-846, Leg. 1.

him to an unsatisfactory peace arrangement.[21] Actually, Del Valle's earlier indiscreet behavior was just beginning to haunt him.

Del Valle had intended to make his way to Mexico City by railway, observing conditions as he went; but again rebel destruction of the rail lines denied him access to the interior. With this route closed, he journeyed to New Orleans, in order to take a steamer to Vera Cruz. At this juncture, Secretary Bryan, apparently unaware of the publicity his agent had received on the border, was pleased with the progress of the mission and decided that Del Valle should continue his investigations beyond Mexico City. President Wilson fully agreed, and Del Valle, therefore, found new instructions awaiting him in Havana when he arrived there on June 28. He was directed to visit Zapata's stronghold, then investigate conditions in all the states surrounding the Mexican capital. This note also informed Del Valle of the presence of William Bayard Hale in Mexico City and directed the Californian to confer confidentially with the President's other agent.[22]

Meanwhile enough of Del Valle's despatches had reached Washington to give Wilson and Bryan an evaluation of the

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[21] Del Valle to State Department, June 27, 1913/23648.

[22] Bryan to Wilson, June 25, 1913, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; Wilson to Bryan, June 27, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 125; Bryan to AmLegation (Havana), June 28, 1913/23649a.

Constitutionalists and what they represented. Of all the Mexican leaders who professed sympathy for the Revolution, Del Valle, strangely enough, seemed most favorably impressed with José M. Maytorena, who had gone into self-exile rather than declare himself in rebellion against Huerta. The Californian, however, accepted the former Sonoran governor's excuse for his absence from his state—he claimed that illness had forced him into exile—and believed that the refugee was sincere in his devotion to the Constitutionalist cause. The special agent was, however, skeptical of the revolutionary ardor of the other two refugee governors he interviewed in Tucson.[23]

Del Valle was also favorably impressed with Sonora's interim governor, Ignacio L. Pesquiera, picturing him as being "greatly liked and respected," a man of "deep convictions," but of only "fair ability." Despite the fact that he interviewed Alvaro Obregón, who was currently winning important military victories over Huerta's armies, the special agent gave the Sonoran military chieftain only scant notice.[24] Nor did the other rebel leaders in Northern Mexico fare very well under Del Valle's critical eye. He characterized Pancho Villa, who controlled most

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[23]Del Valle to State Department, June 8, 9, 1913/ 23641, 23642.

[24]Del Valle to State Department, June 17, 19, 1913/ 23644, 23645.

of the Chihuahua countryside, as "a man of very bad repute."[25] But more importantly, he pictured Venustiano Carranza, the titular leader of the Constitutionalists, as having "personally a good appearance, little ability, narrow, inordinate stubbornness," and as being "inclined to severity, not liked." He added, furthermore, that Carranza was "a detriment to his cause on account of his injudicious leadership."[26] Secretary of State Bryan took special notice of Del Valle's unfavorable impression of the First Chief and, in reporting it to the President, queried if the rebel leader's belligerent attitude might not have resulted from the refusal of the United States to allow the revolutionaries to purchase arms across the border.[27]

If, according to Del Valle, the rebel leaders were not of the highest quality, he did, nevertheless, acknowledge that they held common principles. All professed a filial devotion to the memory of the martyred Madero and

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[25]Del Valle to State Department, June 27, 1913/23648.

[26]Ibid.; Del Valle to State Department, June 23, 1913/23646.

[27]Bryan to Wilson, June 25, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 125; copy in William Jennings Bryan Papers, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress, Box 43. Since March 14, 1912, the export of arms and munitions from the United States to Mexico had been forbidden by executive order of President Taft and continued by President Wilson. See "Proclamation prohibiting the exportation of arms and munitions of war to Mexico," March 14, 1912, U.S. Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1912 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 745.

a determination never to acknowledge the legality of the Huerta government. Accepting these professions at face value, the special agent also noted that the rebels insisted that Huerta had gained power by fraud and murder and, for that reason, they had revolted in an attempt to restore constitutional government. Only the resignation of the usurper and his cabinet and the naming of a Constitutionalist as president ad-interim would satisfy the rebels, he added. When he asked if they would agree to an armistice, during which time impartial elections could be held, the Constitutionalist leaders all responded that they would never agree to such an arrangement unless Huerta first resigned. To the American agent, moreover, they asserted their determination to fight to the last man and, if necessary, to sacrifice all their worldy possessions for the cause.[28]

Although Del Valle unhesitatingly endorsed the sincerity of purpose of the Constitutionalist leaders, he had great reservations about the designs of the rank-and-file of the revolutionary armies. Many of the secondary officials, particularly the guerilla chieftains, he

[28]Del Valle to State Department, June 9, 17, 27, 1913/23642, 23644, 23648. Exiled Governor Maytorena was the first to state the purposes of the Constitutionalist revolt, and Del Valle, instead of repeating those principles as they were enunciated by each rebel leader, referred to the statement of Maytorena as being representative of the sentiments of all of the Constitutionalist leaders.

insisted, were more eager to despoil the substantial property holders than defeat Huerta. They seemed to take great pleasure in levying forced loans and confiscating private property. What was worse from Del Valle's middle-class point of view, the propertyless were being swayed into joining the revolutionary armies by promises of a general confiscation and redistribution of property. Such promises, plus numerous "incindiary and socialist publications" which circulated in Northern Mexico, had incited many who had little understanding of the Constitutionalist cause to form into roving guerilla bands. Equally distressing, Del Valle added, Constitutionalist leaders, including Pesquiera and Carranza, justified the depredations as the only means of financing the rebel war effort. The end result, Del Valle lamented, would be the economic desolation of Mexico. In Sonora, Chihuahua, and Coahuila, where the rebels were most active, he had already found that most of the banks and commercial houses were closed. Industry was at a standstill and even the land was not being cultivated. He found conditions in Nuevo León and Tamaulipas slightly better, mainly because the revolutionaries were relatively inactive in those states. The agent also thankfully acknowledged that, for the most part, American owned property had been spared.[29] Overall it was

[29] Ibid.; Del Valle to State Department, June 12, 19, 1913/23643, 23646.

a grim picture that the special agent painted.

Del Valle's impressions of Zapata and the other revoluctionaries in Central Mexico would doubtless have added to the gloomy view of the Revolution, but he never got the opportunity to form them first hand. By the time he reached Mexico City, his mission had become a fiasco. Despite the supposed secret nature of his activities, the Huerta government and representatives of the press anticipated his arrival. Huerta's charge d'affaires in Washington, after speaking to Bryan, had reported the nature of the Californian's activities along the border, and the Mexican Consul in Eagle Pass, Texas, had reported the agent's conference with Carranza. The context, if not the details, of his conferences in Hermosillo, El Paso, and Piedras Negras were reported in the Mexico City newspapers, along with the agent's itinerary and all the rumors that accompanied his movements. Even before his arrival in the capital city, officials of the provisional government branded the activities of the special agent as "not only officious but injurious to the interests of peace." Since the Constitutionalists were interpreting his visit as a practical recognition of their belligerency, Huerta prophesied that the end result of Del Valle's mission would be the prolonging of the civil war.[30]

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[30]Encargado de Negocios ad-interin a Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, June 12, 1913, AGRE, L-E-786, Leg.

With such advance publicity, it is not surprising that Del Valle was besieged by reporters when he arrived in Mexico City on July 6. He then compounded his earlier indiscretions by submitting to more interviews, in the course of which he revealed the full nature of his mission. To the reporter of Mexico City's pro-Huerta English language newspaper, The Mexican Herald, for example, Del Valle stated that his purpose was "to obtain all the information possible bearing upon the actual political conditions of the country to lay before President Wilson and Secretary of State Bryan."[31] Other papers repeated this or similar statements, along with the persistent rumor that Del Valle would replace Henry Lane Wilson as ambassador. Not surprisingly, then, the special agent was constantly hounded by reporters during his stay in the Mexican capital.[32]

28; R. S. Bravo a Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, June 24, 1913, ibid., L-E-846, Leg. 1; El Imparcial, June 18, July 7, 1913; Mexican Herald, June 20, 1913.

[31] Mexican Herald, June 8, 1913.

[32] El Diario (Mexico City), July 7, 1913, enclosed in Henry Lane Wilson to State Department, July 15, 1913/8165; El Imparcial, July 8, 1913; Diario del Hogar (Mexico City), July 9, 1913; Mexican Herald, July 9, 10, 1913. Kenneth Grieb maintains that Del Valle "destroyed the secrecy of his mission" by his indiscreet handling of the press in Mexico City. See "A California Diplomat's Sojourn in Mexico," California Historical Society Quarterly, XLVII, 321. But, as pointed out above, the Huerta government and the Mexico City press had been fully apprised of the nature of Del Valle's mission long before his arrival in the capital city.

Fearing that the publicity might impair his own mission, William Bayard Hale was annoyed by the excitement that surrounded Del Valle's arrival in Mexico City. The "atmosphere is electric," he wrote to Bryan of conditions in the Mexican capital, and "the possibility of grave indiscretion is distressing."[33] In fact, Bryan, himself, learned of Del Valle's arrival in Mexico City from the sensational press reports, and was greatly distressed by his agent's bungling behavior. In an attempt to muzzle the Californian, Bryan wired Del Valle on July 8 "to avoid newspapers and take care not to permit yourself to be considered an official." Closing with stern words of caution, Bryan added that "the success of your mission depends upon this." Even more concerned the next day when he received no reply, Bryan wired Hale to direct Del Valle to call at the telegraph office for a message. A week passed before the Californian replied. Even then, he insisted that he had "emphatically assured" all the Mexicans he had interviewed that he was doing so in a "private capacity." He also suggested that the news releases were purely speculative, probably originating from the provisional government for propaganda purposes.[34]

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[33]Hale to State Department, July 8, 1913/23624.

[34]State Department to Del Valle, July 8, 1913/23650a; State Department to Hale, July 9, 1913/23625; Del Valle to State Department, July 16, 1913/23651.

The arrival of a second special agent in Mexico City drove Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson to adopt extreme measures for his personal defense. Earlier he had attempted to discredit Hale. Bypassing normal State Department channels, he penned a letter directly to the President:

> I have assumed that Dr. Hale has no official mission in Mexico and that he is not charged with the making of any report to you concerning conditions in Mexico, but in the event that information should be offered you from this source I deem it my duty, as your personal representative here, to say that this person is by temperament and habit entirely unfit to form a just and clear idea of the situation here.

Hale, the ambassador continued, failed completely "to grasp the underlying causes of the unrest in Mexico." In closing, Wilson added that he felt it his duty to make sure that the President was not misled by "the reports of sentimental idealists."[35]

After the arrival of Del Valle, the ambassador's official despatches grew increasingly caustic. He claimed that he could not protect the interests of Americans because "the presence in Mexico of persons claiming to be representatives of the President are lowering the dignity of the Embassy and detracting from the respect the Mexican people have been taught to regard it during the last three

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[35]Ambassador Wilson to President Wilson, July 1, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 94.

years."[36] The belligerent ambassador did get to the heart of the matter, however, when he wrote that "the President should understand that . . . he is now face to face with grave responsibilities which cannot be avoided by a halting or uncertain policy."[37] Such was the tone of the messages that President Wilson found on his desk when he returned to Washington from his holiday in New Hampshire on July 14.

He also found fresh despatches from Hale, adding new justification for Ambassador Wilson's recall. The special agent reported that Wilson, in collusion with Huerta, was rounding up all possible support in Mexico City in favor of diplomatic recognition of the provisional government. At the same time, Hale insisted, the ambassador was ingratiating himself and blackening the reputation of the Wilson Administration in the eyes of American businessmen. Rumor had it, the agent added, that, in speaking to members of the American colony, Ambassador Wilson had referred to the administration in Washington as a "vicious pack of fools." In defending himself, the ambassador had even released to the press a letter of commendation from former President William Howard Taft.[38] Clearly the time for a

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[36]Wilson to State Department, July 9, 1913/7999.

[37]Wilson to State Department, July 11, 1913/8027.

[38]Hale to Davis, July 12, 17, 1913/23626, 23692; Hale to State Department, July 15, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 94.

change had come.

By this time, however, Hale was pleading for more than the mere recall of Henry Lane Wilson. Like the ambassador himself, Hale wanted the Administration to adopt a more positive Mexican policy. "We [Americans] are, in spite of ourselves, the guardians of order and justice and decency on this Continent," he wrote to the President:

> . . . we are providentially, naturally and inescapably (sic), charged with the maintenance of humanity's interests here. Civilization and humanity look to us, and have a right to look to us, for protection on this Continent. . . .

To ensure that he was not misunderstood, Hale added:

> This is no argument for intervention in Mexico. Intervention is not necessary. Firm representation, politely made, as by a perfectly friendly, yet fully determined and powerful neighbor, would, I believe, save Mexico. To frame the exact plan, to hit upon just the fashion and manner in which the necessary influence can be brought to bear, without involving us too deeply, may take long and hard thought. Then, let the Government of the United States give it that thought. But let it not abandon Mexico. . . .[39]

Indeed, the President had been giving a great deal of thought to a course of action in dealing with the Huerta Government. Acting quickly upon his return to Washington, President Wilson recalled Ambassador Wilson to Washington for "consultation." Making a clean sweep of his worrisome diplomats, he also recalled Special Agent Del Valle. The Californian was ordered to cease his interviews, slip out

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[39]Hale, Memorandum of Affairs in Mexico, July 9, 1913/8203.

of Mexico City quietly, and inform no one of his destination.[40]

Ironically, Wilson and Del Valle returned to the United States aboard the same steamer. Actually Del Valle had called upon the ambassador and interviewed him before their departure. At that time or during the cruise home, the special agent revealed to Ambassador Wilson that he held both the deposed Madero regime and the Constitutionalists in low esteem. Finding themselves in basic agreement, the two deposed diplomats developed a cordial relationship by the time of their arrival in New York. Del Valle, Wilson wrote in his memoirs, had "refused to be used by any particular faction" in Mexico and had made a serious effort "to ascertain the truth."[41] Such comments were a

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[40]State Department to Wilson, July 15, 1913/7743; State Department to Del Valle, June 15, 1913/23650b.

[41]Mexican Herald, July 18, 1913; New York Times, July 19, 1913, p. 2; Wilson, Diplomatic Episodes, 307-308. Upon their return to the United States, rumor also leaked from the State Department that Wilson and Del Valle were in basic agreement concerning conditions in Mexico and what policy the United States should follow. See New York Times, July 27, 1913, II, 2; New York World, July 27, 1913. On April 16, 1920, in testimony given before Senator Albert B. Fall's sub-committee of the Committee on Foreign Relations, Henry Lane Wilson again praised Del Valle as an unbiased investigator whose opinions resembled his own. See Investigation of Mexican Affairs, U.S. Senate, Sen. Doc. 285, 66 Cong., 2 Sess., 2289-91; hereinafter cited as Investigation of Mexican Affairs. In the course of his testimony, Wilson also charged that Secretary of State Bryan had not trusted the reports of William Bayard Hale and had sent Del Valle to Mexico City for the purpose of keeping an eye on Hale. All available evidence indicates that this charge is false, but at least one historical account has perpetuated this view by citing Wilson's

far cry from the ambassador's response to Del Valle's arrival in Mexico. His attitude toward Hale, with whom he disagreed, remained implacably hostile.

On July 26 Del Valle called at the Department of State and, after a personal conference with Secretary Bryan, dictated his final report. His summation of conditions in Northern Mexico was substantially the same as he had reported earlier. He again acknowledged that the rebel leaders of Sonora and perhaps a thousand men surrounding Carranza were sincere revolutionaries. They were attempting to overthrow a government which they considered to have been established by unconstitutional means. The other rebels in the field, he added, followed "dangerous leaders" who were "pursuing neither the justification of ideals nor . . . any honest motives." Having made only a brief study of conditions in the center of Mexico, Del Valle noted that this type of irresponsible guerrilla activity was present in virtually every state. He

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testimony. See James Morton Callahan, American Foreign Policy in Mexican Relations (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1932), 535. The scholar must use considerable caution in utilizing the testimony contained in the Fall Committee report. The sub-committee conducted its investigations in 1919 and 1920, as a means of embarrassing President Wilson during his fight for the ratification of the Treaty of Versailles. Most of the witnesses were hostile to the Wilson Administration, and the committee's final report condemned the President for his handling of Mexican affairs.

acknowledged that the most formidable uprising in the center was that of Emiliano Zapata in the states of Morelos, Guerrero, and Puebla. But Del Valle made the mistake, as other special agents in the future would, of associating Zapata with rebel leaders who had no legitimate aims in view.[42]

Del Valle also noted that while Huerta was unable to put an end to the guerilla activities in the countryside, wherever possible he was entrenching himself in power by installing generals as state governors. Huerta and other officials of the provisional government justified their arbitrary rule, Del Valle noted, on the ground that the populace was illiterate and without understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship. What was needed, these officials insisted, was a man like Huerta, who possessed "the iron hand to bring into submission the people who cannot be controlled by any other methods." Then Del Valle allowed his own bourgeois prejudices to creep in, concluding that forceful methods were partially justified, because Mexico did not possess "that powerful middle class which is the backbone of free government."[43]

Although Del Valle obviously had little sympathy for

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[42]New York Times, July 27, 1913, II, 2; Del Valle to Bryan, July [n.d.], 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 95.

[43]Del Valle to Bryan, July [n.d.], 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 95.

the Mexican revolutionaries, he noted with considerable insight what he considered to be the two basic causes of the current upheaval in Mexico. One was the personal ambitions of politicians, stultified by thirty-five years of Porfirio Díaz's despotic rule, but given free reign by his ouster. More importantly, once elevated to power, these politicians, especially Madero, had made more promises than they could immediately redeem. As a result, they found that they could not control the passions they had helped to arouse.[44]

The purpose of Del Valle's mission had been to present the Administration with accurate information on conditions in Mexico. Wilson and Bryan solicited no policy recommendations from their agent, nor did he offer any outright. Implied recommendations inevitably crept into his reports. The member of a substantial Spanish-Mexican-American family, Del Valle's sympathies went out to those in Mexico whose status paralleled his own. Thus, the impression emerged that the rebels, with their uncertain leadership and confiscatory methods, were not worthy of support from the United States. If Del Valle's reports implied that the rebels were unworthy of support, they also hinted at the advisability of supporting the Huerta government as a means of promoting order in Mexico. Such tacit recommendations, plus the opinion offered by Hale to the effect

[44] Ibid.

that Del Valle should not "be taken seriously as a reporter," placed the Californian in an increasingly unfavorable light with the Administration.[45] Del Valle, moreover, continued to exhibit a complete lack of judgement in meeting the press. Even after his return to Washington, Wilson and Bryan repeatedly denied that Del Valle had been serving the Administration in any official capacity. When reporters cornered him as he was leaving the State Department building and questioned him personally on the matter, he blurted out the following comment, correcting himself in mid-statement: "I cannot talk at this time about my mission to Mexico—that is, as to the purpose of my going there."[46]

His patience worn thin by Del Valle's repeated errors of judgment, the President received even more distressing news concerning his special agent from another Californian, progressive Republican Congressman William Kent. Kent revealed that Del Valle was considered a reactionary by progressives in Los Angeles and was said to be a political associate of newspapermen William Randolph Hearst and Harrison Gray Otis, both of whom had extensive property

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[45]Hale, Memorandum on Affairs in Mexico, July 9, 1913/8203.

[46]New York Times, July 27, 1913, II, 2; New York World, June 27, 1913.

interests in Mexico.[47] Their Los Angeles newspapers—Hearst's Examiner and Otis's Times—had, of course, been booming Del Valle for the position of Ambassador to Mexico from the outset of his special mission, and they continued to do so upon his return to the United States.[48]

If Bryan had ever seriously entertained thoughts of appointing Del Valle to the ambassadorship, those notions were now completely dashed. In view of his apparent relationship with Hearst and Otis, the outcome of such an appointment could have proved as disastrous as that of James M. Sullivan—another deserving Democrat with big-business connections—whom Bryan rewarded with an appointment as Minister to the Dominican Republic.[49]

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[47] Edwin T. Earl to William Kent, August 1, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 123. Kent, gravely concerned over American economic exploitation of Latin America, from time to time passed on to Wilson correspondence from his constituents and friends that touched upon the subject, especially when one of the President's agents was involved. He remained one of the few congressional Republicans who sympathized with Wilson's Mexican policy.

[48] Los Angeles Examiner, June 10, 11, July 31, 1913; Los Angeles Times, June 7, 10, 11, 1913, July 27, 1913. Both Hearst and Otis owned more than a million acres of Mexican agricultural property, while Hearst was also involved in oil and railroad enterprises. For the nature of their holdings, see John Kenneth Turner, Barborous Mexico (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969), 216-17.

[49] Ignoring Sullivan's affiliation with New York bankers, Bryan naively trusted the New Yorker because of his past record of loyalty to the party. Once in Santo Domingo, Sullivan used his post for the benefit of his banker friends by transferring into their hands the deposits of the American Receiver-General of Dominican Customs. Through his close association with Dominican

Whatever Del Valle's affiliations may have been, Wilson and Bryan now suspected him and terminated his services shortly after his return to the United States. There is no record of any formal dismissal or evidence that Del Valle left Washington under a cloud of disgrace. By August 4, he was back in Los Angeles singing the praises of the Wilson Administration's Mexican policy; but no longer did the local press hint at ambassadorial possibilities, nor is there any evidence that Wilson or Bryan ever again solicitied his advice.[50]

What was the effect of Del Valle's impressions? President Wilson assuredly ignored the agent's implied approval of the Huerta regime. Still, despite the Californian's blundering behavior, the President may not have ignored his negative expressions concerning the revolutionaries. One thing is certain: for three months, while the Administration applied moral pressure on the Huerta regime in an attempt to effect a change of

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President José Bordas Valdes, Sullivan also contrived to line his own pockets in what proved to be one of the most sordid episodes of American diplomacy. See Link, New Freedom, 107-10; Coletta, William Jennings Bryan, II, 116-19, 196-99; Wilfrid Hardy Callcott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1942), 397-98.

[50]New York Times, August 5, 1913, p. 3; Los Angeles Times, August 6, 1913. Upon his return to Los Angeles, Del Valle resumed his position on the Los Angeles Public Service Commission and was elected its president.

government that would affect all Mexicans, the Zapatistas and Constitutionalists were completely ignored. Wilson made no attempt to secure either their approval of his policy or their cooperation in carrying it out. Perhaps he had temporarily discounted the revolutionaries as an insignificant force in Mexican national affairs. If so, Del Valle's reports may have created that impression.

Meanwhile, both Del Valle and Ambassador Wilson had been summoned to testify before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Del Valle was sent packing off to California and did not appear before the committee; but Wilson did, and he used the opportunity to defend his diplomacy and at the same time to lash out at the President's use of special agents, who, he insisted, provided misleading information. This inference, that the executive was relying upon the advice of diplomats who had not been sanctioned by senatorial confirmation, led members of the Foreign Relations Committee, ever sensitive to encroachments upon their foreign policy-making prerogatives, to insist that the agent's reports be made available for their perusal. Determined to save himself further embarrassment at the hands of the recalcitrant ambassador, the President asked for his resignation, which was duly delivered to the State Department on August 4.[51]

[51]New York Times, July 31, August 5, 1913, p. 1; New York World, July 31, 1913.

While President Wilson was dispensing with the services of two of his representatives to Mexico, the one remaining in Mexico City, William Bayard Hale, continued his barrage of pessimistic reports. Economic conditions continued to decline, he reported. France had announced that he would provide no more loans, the Minister of Finance had been dismissed, and the president of the Mexican National Railway had resigned in despair. The complete financial collapse of the Huerta government, Hale believed, was inevitable. Huerta, nonetheless, was determined to remain in power and threatened anyone who hinted at the advisability of his resigning.[52] The time, Hale insisted, was "auspicious for the inauguration of a positive policy in Mexico." "Would you," he inquired of the President, "consider a suggestion?"[53] When no reply was forthcoming from Washington, the special agent proceeded with his own unsolicited recommendations. The responsible American in Mexico, he believed, no longer desired recognition for the Huerta government. The rebels, he added, had done nothing to justify special consideration from the United States. Therefore, any plans for immediate recognition, conditional or otherwise, should be scrapped. Instead, he suggested that the Administration

[52]Hale to State Department, July 15, 17, 18, 28, August 5, 1913/23627, 23628, 23629, 23633, 23639.

[53]Hale to State Department, July 15, 1913/23627.

state categorically what conditions Mexico must meet for future recognition. These should include free elections and Huerta's self-elimination as a candidate for president. Hale was aware that Henry Lane Wilson had earlier been directed to make such conditions the basis of his negotiations with the provisional government, but he was certain that the ambassador had offered them to Huerta rather "apologetically." Hale then insisted that the Administration must make it clear to Huerta that it was prepared to compel such a settlement, but added that he was "inclined to the opinion that only moral determined compulsion would be necessary to carry these points."[54]

A week passed with no response to his suggestions. Meanwhile Huerta took the initiative to secure an accommodation with the Wilson Administration. Certain that Hale was secretly reporting to President Wilson, Huerta sent Hale's friend and recently resigned Minister of Foreign Relations, Francisco de la Barra, to the special agent with a proposition. De la Barra was being sent on a mission to Europe and, en route, was to stop in the United States. Huerta was hopeful of arranging a personal conference for de la Barra with President Wilson, at which the Mexican diplomat could hopefully present a persuasive case for recognition. Hale earnestly recommended that the President meet with de la Barra, but not for the reasons

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[54]Hale to State Department, July 17, 1913/23629.

Huerta envisioned. Hale believed that the conference would afford Wilson an excellent opportunity to personally apply his moral suasion and impress upon the usurper's representative the necessity of accepting the previously recommended prerequisites for future recognition. Wilson declined to meet with de la Barra, because he had already decided to send another special agent to Mexico City to carry out Hale's recommendations.[55]

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[55]Hale to State Department, July 24, 29, 1913/23632, 23634; State Department to Hale, August 1, 1913/23634.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST REBUFF

By the end of July, 1913, President Wilson had decided to follow William Bayard Hale's advice—to eliminate Huerta and aid in establishing a new government in Mexico City by applying "moral determined compulsion." The procedure that he had decided upon, one which was endorsed by several business firms with interests in Mexico, was based on a plan proposed earlier by Judge J. D. Haff of Kansas City.[1] Wilson must have been aware that adoption of the Haff plan might place him in a compromising position. Months before, on March 11, he had declared that his administration would not support special interests in Latin America.[2] There was, moreover, a growing conviction among his advisors that economic support by industrial concessionaires, especially British oil interests, was all that sustained Huerta's power.[3] Adoption of the Haff plan, therefore, might later

[1]Judge Haff's plan, which was endorsed by the Southern Pacific Railroad, Phelps Dodge and Company, the Greene Cananea Copper Company, and the Mexican Petroleum Company, is outlined above in Chapter II, 43-44.

[2]New York Times, March 12, 1913, p. 1; Baker, Woodrow Wilson, IV, 64-67.

[3]Houston, Eight Years With Wilson's Cabinet, 69, 73-74; Cronon, The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, 43-44; Hale

be construed as a move by the President to support one group of special interests against another.

Determined that his policy should not smack of "dollar diplomacy," Wilson resolved that his plan be carried out in a disinterested manner, by a special agent who sympathized with New Freedom ideals and had absolutely no connection with business concessionaires. John Lind of Minnesota was such a man. In fact, Lind insisted that he was chosen for the mission for no other reason than the fact that he had never been associated with concessionaires or any other kind of interest in Mexico. Other than this, he had no obvious qualifications as an emissary to the republic south of the border. He did not speak Spanish, he knew nothing of Mexican affairs, and he had no previous diplomatic experience; but he offered what Wilson and Bryan considered a most important qualification: he was a loyal progressive Democrat.[4]

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to State Department, June 3, 1913/23616; Haff to Wilson, May 12, 1913/7576. Although he noted that foreign loans had netted the Huerta government very little, Hale did acknowledge that the loans had allowed the usurper to survive a financial crisis and sustain his government temporarily. Judge Haff, in submitting his plan to the President, had insisted that British oil interests were primarily responsible for propping up the Huerta regime.

[4]Testimony of William F. Buckley, December 6, 1919, and John Lind, April 27, 1920, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 767-814, 2318; Interview with Lind, November 12, 1919, William F. Buckley Manuscripts, Latin American Collection, University of Texas Library, File No. 233; "John Lind as a Strong Personality," American Review of Reviews, XLVIII (September, 1913), 281. Buckley, a lawyer and speculator in Mexican real estate and oil leases, served

A politician most of his adult life, Lind shared many of the beliefs, anxieties, and other characteristics common to reformers of the Progressive Era. Only the fact that he was a Swedish immigrant prevented him from completely fitting the urban middle-class, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, Progressive stereotype.[5] Arriving in the United States in 1868, Lind was reared on a Minnesota farm. But like so

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as counsel for the Huerta delegation at the Niagara Falls Conference, arranged by Argentina, Brazil, and Chile to settle disputes growing out of the American military intervention at Vera Cruz in April, 1914. He was openly hostile to Wilson's Mexican policy, and he acknowledged that Lind was chosen as the President's agent because of his complete lack of association with any interests in Mexico. He believed that an appointment based on such considerations was naive and ill-considered.

[5]George M. Stephenson, John Lind of Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1935), 3-27, 191. Basic studies of the Progressive Era characterize "progressives" as being well-educated, urban middle-class businessmen and professionals from the nation's older families of Anglo-Saxon stock. For basic statements of this stereotype, see George E. Mowry, The California Progressives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952), 86-104; Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1955), 133-73; George E. Mowry, The Era of Theodore Roosevelt (New York: Harper & Row, Pub., 1958), 85-105. More recently historians have suggested that the base of the progressive stereotype needs broadening. Two recent articles indicate that the WASP background of progressive reformers may be overdrawn and that the role of the immigrant in the Progressive Movement has been largely overlooked. See J. Joseph Huthmacher, "Urban Liberalism and the Age of Reform," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLIX (September, 1962), 231-41; John D. Buenker, "Edward F. Dunne: The Urban New Stock Democrat as Progressive," Mid-America, L (January, 1968), 3-21. Another recent article suggests that earlier studies failed to note the importance of the rural background of progressive reformers, especially those of the Midwest. It argues that a majority of progressives came from the farms and small towns of rural America and moved to the city after reaching adulthood. See Wayne E.

many other midwestern progressives, he spent much of his adult life in the city, practicing law and engaging in public affairs. Seeking to emulate his childhood hero, Abraham Lincoln, Lind began his political career as a Republican. Beginning with moderately conservative views, he served three successive terms in Congress between 1887 and 1893. During this time, however, he became increasingly dissatisfied with his party's failure to check the domineering and corruptive tendencies of big business, and before he retired from Congress he had earned the reputation of a reformer of unimpeachable honesty. Supporting such measures as pure food laws, forfeiture of unused lands by the railroads, a more effective Interstate Commerce Commission, and the Sherman Antitrust Act, he won repeated endorsements from Minnesota's Farmers' Alliance and was wooed by the People's Party. Although he was alienated by the Populists' jeremiads and by their reliance on panaceas, he, nonetheless, endorsed William Jennings Bryan for President in 1896 and became an undying supporter of the Great Commoner for the remainder of his political life.[6]

Fuller, "The Rural Roots of the Progressive Leaders," Agricultural History, XLII (January, 1968), 1-13.

[6]Stephenson, Lind, 15-117; John D. Hicks, "The People's Party in Minnesota," Minnesota History, V (November, 1924), 555-59; Carl H. Chrislock, "A Cycle of the History of Minnesota Republicanism," Minnesota History, XXXIX (Fall, 1964), 102-103.

Having bolted the Republican Party, Lind accepted support of reform Democrats and Populists, while unsuccessfully contesting for the Minnesota governorship in 1896. But in 1898 he embellished his domestic reform appeal with ardent support for America's righteous war against Spain and with his equally outspoken criticism of the Republicans' postwar imperialism. With fusion support, and now calling himself a Democrat, he was elected governor. At the beginning of his term, he called for a thoroughgoing reform program, including tax reform, expansion of the activities of the state correctional and charitable institutions; stricter antitrust laws; reservation for the state of mineral rights on lands disposed of in the future; and direct democracy devices, such as the direct primary, initiative, and referendum. The noted reformer-economist, Richard T. Ely, was moved to characterize Lind's proposed program as "the epitome of the drift of opinion of those who truly had the public welfare at heart." Like Wilson's later New Freedom, Lind dedicated his program to freeing politics and business from the grip of special interests; but he faced an obstructionist legislature throughout his term and secured few reforms. His administration, nonetheless, served as a harbinger of Progressivism in Minnesota.[7]

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[7]Stephenson, Lind, 133-78; Russel B. Nye, Midwestern Progressive Politics (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 1959), 214-15.

Swept out of office by the Republican landslide of 1900, Lind remained a powerful force in Minnesota politics. He was again elected to Congress in 1902 but retired voluntarily after one term. Thereafter he served actively in Minneapolis civic affairs and as a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota. He campaigned actively for Bryan in all his presidential bids. Although he was wooed by the Bull Moose Party in 1912, he remained a loyal Democrat and was instrumental in securing a Minnesota delegation that supported Woodrow Wilson at the Democratic National Convention. Following the election, he was called to Washington to discuss policy and patronage with his old friend, Secretary of State designate Bryan, and with Wilson's personal advisor, Colonel Edward House.[8]

Lind, himself, was an obvious candidate for appointment. Indeed, he declined the ambassadorship to Sweden because he did not think it ethical for a Swedish immigrant to serve in that post. Being the most popular Democrat in Minnesota, he also declined to serve as Assistant Secretary of Interior, because neither he nor his friends thought the position adequate for one of his political status.[9] Thus, politics and personal scruples

[8]Stephenson, Lind, 180-206, 348-50.

[9]Wilson to Lind, June 11, 1913, and Lind to Wilson, June 12, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 285; Congressman W. S. Hammond (Minnesota) to Lind, June 23, 1913, John

combined to make the Minnesota progressive available for the more publicly noteworthy mission to Mexico.

Lind's Scandanavian ancestry was reflected in his blue eyes and grey-flecked sandy hair. Tall and slender, his tousled, unkempt appearance and gaunt features prompted a contemporary journalist to characterize him as "lincoln-esque." His earlier reputation for unimpeachable honesty persisted in 1913, and he was considered an impatient man of action. Although he had a nervous habit of tapping on the stump of his left wrist—his hand was amputated after a boyhood hunting accident—to emphasize a point, he was noted for his cool, forthright manner of meeting problems under pressure. As President Wilson, himself, noted in a letter to his wife: "Lind . . . is just the well balanced sort not to be disquieted by what goes on about him."[10]

Lind Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota, Box 3. The Wilson Papers do not reveal an official record of a presidential offer of the post of Assistant Secretary of Interior; but the letter from Congressman Hammond to Lind, cited above, indicates that the offer was tendered. The Congressman also congratulates Lind for having declined the position because it lacked dignity, and even suggests that the offer would never had been made if he had known about it in advance.

[10]"John Lind As A Strong Personality," American Review of Reviews, XLVIII, 281; "The Week: Mexico," The Nation, XCVII (August 7, 1913), 112; "Mexico: What Does Mediation Mean?," Outlook, CIV (August 16, 1913), 833; New York Times, August 5, 1913, p. 3; Eleanor Wilson McAdoo (ed.), The Priceless Gift: The Love Letters of Woodrow Wilson and Ellen Axson Wilson (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1962), 295.

With no forewarning, on July 28, Lind received a telegram from Bryan, asking him to come to Washington for "consultation" on a confidential matter of great importance. When Lind replied that he would be delayed a few days, Bryan revealed only that when he was available, he should come prepared to remain for several weeks. Thus, Lind was completely unaware of the purpose of his call to service until he arrived in Washington on August 1. He apparently agreed with the objective of his mission, because, after only two days of discussion with Bryan and Wilson, he set out for Mexico.[11]

Only a naive man, or one who had great faith in his President and the righteousness of the task set before him, would have undertaken the mission that Wilson laid out for Lind. Wilson apparently assumed that Huerta and the Mexican people would submerge their nationalism temporarily and accept a change of government dictated by the United States, because that is precisely what Wilson's personally prepared instructions to Lind called for. The special agent was to inform Huerta that:

> the Government of the United States does not feel at liberty any longer to stand inactively by while it becomes daily more and more evident that no real progress is being made towards the establishment of a government at the City of Mexico which the country will obey and respect.

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[11]Bryan to Lind, July 28, 29, 1913, Lind Papers, Box 3; Bryan to Wilson, July 31, 1913, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; Testimony of Lind, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 2317-18.

He was then to dictate terms which Mexico should follow in establishing an acceptable government:

> (a) An immediate cessation of fighting throughout Mexico—a definite armistice solemnly entered into and scrupulously observed;
> (b) Security given for an early and free election in which all will agree to take part;
> (c) The consent of General Huerta to bind himself not to be a candidate for election as President of the Republic at this election;
> (d) The agreement of all parties to abide by the results of the election and cooperate in the most loyal way in organizing and supporting the new administration.

Lind was then to offer American aid in arranging such a settlement and to promise diplomatic recognition for the regime thus established. Perhaps Wilson's naivete was most evident in the last paragraph of Lind's instructions, a closing statement that Huerta would use in order to ignore Wilson's tacit ultimatum and offer a counter solution:

> If Mexico can suggest any better way in which to show our friendship, serve the people of Mexico, and meet our international obligations, we are more than willing to consider the suggestion.[12]

John Lind was an ambassador in every respect except name. He was invested with full power to negotiate with the head-of-state in Mexico City and was granted an ambassador's salary, but he could not bear the title, since that would constitute diplomatic recognition of the Huerta

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[12]Instructions (Mexico), Lind Papers, Box 3; draft of instructions prepared on President Wilson's portable typewriter in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 95.

government.[13] Instead, he bore a letter designating him as the "personal representative" of the President and "advisor to the Embassy."[14] In dispatching their third agent, Wilson and Bryan consulted no one—neither Huerta, the Constitutionalists, nor the Senate of the United States. On the day of Lind's departure from Washington, the Embassy in Mexico City was notified simultaneously of Ambassador Wilson's resignation and of the special agent's impending arrival. Everyone else, Huerta included, was informed by a State Department press release of the same day.[15]

Not the slightest hint of the mission's purpose was included in the Department's message to Mexico City or in the press release, but a security leak from within the Administration resulted in the publication of garbled versions of Lind's instructions. From these press comments, the impression invariably emerged that Lind had been sent to force the immediate resignation of Huerta and that he would then direct the formation of a new

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[13]Bryan to Lind, August 5, 1913, Lind Papers, Box 14. In this note, Bryan informs Lind that he will receive an ambassador's salary—$17,500—while serving in Mexico.

[14]Letter, To Whom It May Concern, August 4, 1913, Lind Papers, Box 3.

[15]State Department to American Charge' d'Affaires, Mexico City, August 4, 1913, Foreign Relations, 1913, 817-18; New York Times, August 5, 1913, p. 1.

provisional government in which the Constitutionalists would participate.[16]

Sensing that defiance of the United States would add stature to his faltering regime, Huerta quickly exploited the rumor-clouded situation by launching a series of verbal blasts at the policy of the Wilson Administration. He whipped the people of the capital city into a patriotic frenzy by announcing that he would refuse any mediation offers by the United States, declaring that "national dignity and decorum will not brook interference by outside parties."[17] Besieged by reporters, and knowing no more than they about the true nature of Lind's mission, American Charge d'Affaires Nelson O'Shaughnessy frantically cabled Washington for authority to deny the rumors. Denial was necessary, he reported, since the populace of the capital city was so aroused by Huerta's comments that the Governor of the Federal District had come to the Embassy, warning that Lind might be mobbed at the railway station when he arrived. The only explanation Bryan allowed O'Shaughnessy to give was that Lind came on a "mission of peace" and that no weight should be given to "misrepresentations of

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[16]New York Times, August 5, 10, 1913, p. 1; New York World, August 5, 1913. Similar versions of Lind's instructions also appeared in the Mexico City press. See Mexican Herald, August 6, 1913; El Imparcial, August 6, 1913.

[17]Mexican Herald, August 6, 1913; El Imparcial, August 6, 1913.

sensational newspapers."[18] With this reply, the Charge' could not quell the excitement that Huerta had provoked.

His prestige on the rise, Huerta ignored the conciliatory tone of Bryan's note and directed his Foreign Minister to reply that if "Mr. Lind . . . does not properly establish his official character or if he is not the bearer of recognition of this government by yours, his sojourn in this Republic will not be pleasing." When the text of this note was splashed across the headlines in Mexico City, anti-Americanism intensified. In their exuberance to support Huerta's nationalism, representatives of the press condemned the sending of a special agent instead of an ambassador, insisting that this action was designed by Wilson to make the Mexican nation appear inferior. The most vehement columnists insisted that Lind be expelled as persona non grata. Special Agent Hale, who was still in Mexico City, noted that informed Mexicans were comparing the Lind Mission to the indignities suffered by the United States in the Citizen Genet and Sackville-West incidents.[19]

Retaining his righteous plane, Wilson retorted that he

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[18] O'Shaughnessy to State Department, August 5, 1913, and State Department to O'Shaughnessy, August 6, 1913, Foreign Affairs, 1913, 818.

[19] O'Shaughnessy to State Department, August 7, 1913/10637; Hale to State Department, August 7, 1913/23636; Mexican Herald, August 7, 1913; El Imparcial, August 7, 1913; El Independiente (Mexico City), August 7, 1913.

was fully within his rights in sending an "advisor to the Embassy" and was certain that the provisional government would not regard the nature of Lind's mission as unfriendly.[20] Huerta, having defended the dignity of the nation, could now magnanimously offer guarantees for Lind's safety. His Minister of Gobernacion issued a directive outlawing violent demonstrations, while the Minister of Foreign Affairs issued a statement to the effect that Lind, like any other foreigner, could travel freely in Mexico, but that he would be treated as a private citizen and accorded no special consideration.[21]

Lind's arrival in Vera Cruz on August 9 served to perpetuate the tension. Although quite unintentional, the fact that he journeyed to Mexico aboard a battleship lent credence to the rumors that ascribed a punitive character to his mission. Crowds gathered at the dock when he debarked. They appeared more bewildered than hostile; nonetheless, a troop of policemen greeted Lind and his wife and accompanied them to the American Consulate, while the citizens of Vera Cruz passively observed the procession.[22] After spending the night in the port city,

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[20]State Department to O'Shaughnessy, August 8, 1913/10637.

[21]O'Shaughnessy to State Department, August 8, 9, 1913/8274, 8276; El Imparcial, August 10, 1913.

[22]El Imparcial, August 10, 1913; El País (Mexico City), August 10, 1913; Washington Times, August 11, 1913, in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 95; William W. Canada (American Consul, Vera Cruz) to State Department, August

the Linds travelled to Mexico City, arriving concurrently with a government staged demonstration in another part of town that was more pro-Huerta than anti-Lind. At the railway station, Lind revealed a talent for shirtsleeve diplomacy that would characterize the early phase of his mission. Addressing the reporters, he gave assurances that he had in no way been menaced and was gracious in his praise of Mexican hospitality. "All the Mexican authorities with [whom] I have come in touch," he announced, "have treated me with the courtesy which is characteristic of Latins."[23]

Actually, Lind had been well coached. Bryan had ordered Hale to greet the new agent at Vera Cruz. The two met aboard ship and conferred for some time before going ashore. Since neither spoke Spanish, Bryan directed the American Consul at Vera Cruz, William W. Canada, to accompany the two agents to Mexico City and offer his advice. Thus, when Lind arrived in the capital, he was fully abreast of the situation and knew what behavior might have

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14, 1913/8536. Actually Wilson had intended for his agent to catch a commercial steamer from New Orleans but, apparently, failed to check sailing schedules before the Linds departed from Washington. No steamer was available at New Orleans. Wishing to avoid delay, Wilson wired Lind to proceed to Galveston, Texas, where the battleship New Hampshire awaited to take him to Vera Cruz. See Bryan to Lind, August 5, 1913, Lind Papers, Box 14; Lind to State Department, August 6, 7, 1913/8250, 8251.

[23] Mexican Herald, August 11, 1913; Canada to State Department, August 14, 1913/8536.

the best effect. He and Hale sensed that conditions in the Mexican capital were potentially explosive, and they agreed that if Wilson's demands were presented immediately, aroused public opinion might force a negative reply. Lind, therefore, requested that the nature of his instructions be kept a secret temporarily. Meanwhile Lind remained close to Hale, residing at the latter's hotel, the Lascurain, before moving to the Embassy on the 13th. Not surprisingly, the two agents, finding that they held many views in common, became fast friends and confidants, and each praised the efforts of the other to Washington.[24]

[24]State Department to O'Shaughnessy, August 8, 1913, and State Department to Lind, August 8, 1913/10637; State Department to Canada, August 8, 1913/8265a; Canada to State Department, August 14, 1913/8536; Lind to State Department, August 28, 1913/10487; Bryan to Tumulty, August 8, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 48; Hale to State Department, August 20, 1913, ibid., Series II, Box 96; Lind to Bryan, [n.d.], Lind Papers, Box 14; El Imparcial, August 10, 1913; El País, August 10, 1913; Washington Times, August 11, 1913, in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 95; New York Times, August 10, 1913, p. 1. Wilson had intended for Lind to take up immediate residence in the Embassy, but the linens, dishes, and some of the furnishings, having been the personal property of Henry Lane Wilson, had been removed. Meanwhile, Bryan ordered O'Shaughnessy to procure new furnishings and prepare the Embassy for the Linds' occupancy. See State Department to O'Shaughnessy, August 10, 11, 1913/8277, 8300A; O'Shaughnessy to State Department, August 10, 11, 1913/8278, 8301; State Department to Lind, August 11, 1913/8278. One incident occurred at the time when the Linds moved into the Embassy that indicated how effective Hale's briefing had been. Mrs. Lind, when offered the bed once used by Mrs. Henry Lane Wilson, refused, exclaiming, "What! Sleep in the bed of a murderess?" The wife of Charge' O'Shaughnessy, who greatly admired Mrs. Wilson, recorded the incident. See Edith O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico (New York: Harper and Bros., Pub., 1916), 14.

Wilson accepted the advice of his agents and directed Lind to withhold the proposals until he received further instructions. Meanwhile Lind was to report on conditions as he found them.[25] Several factors may have caused the President to pause. Wilson had not contemplated the possibility of the Lind Mission's being so severely criticized. Not only had Lind's coming caused a furor in Mexico, but most of the governments which had recognized Huerta were also furiously critical. Their diplomats regarded the mission with "merriment," prophesied failure, and were not the least bit inhibited from publicly saying so.[26] Republicans in the Senate also seized the opportunity to embarrass the President. Not critical of Lind personally, Clarence D. Clark of Wyoming introduced a resolution calling for an investigation of the Administration's Mexican policy, while William A. Smith of Michigan insisted that the Constitutionalist lobby in Washington was guiding Wilson's hand. While Albert B. Fall of New Mexico and Boies Penrose of Pennsylvania lent their voices to the criticism, Augustus Bacon of Georgia, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, defended the Administration and, after three days of debate, succeeded in having

[25] State Department to Lind, August 10, 1913/8274a.

[26] New York Times, August 6, 1913, p. 2.

Clark's resolution placed at the bottom of the calendar.[27]

While President Wilson collected his thoughts, Lind busied himself by touring the city and meeting various members of the foreign colony and diplomatic corps. He had several callers at the Hotel Lascurain and received numerous telegrams, letters, and petitions from members of the diplomatic corps, well-wishers, and cranks, as well as from friends and enemies of Huerta. A model of discretion throughout these early days of his mission, he remained placid and cordial but refused to discuss the nature of his instructions with anyone except Hale. In his only public statement, all he would reveal was that President Wilson's policy was designed to restore peace to Mexico and that it was animated by an honest and sincere desire to render assistance.[28]

Huerta, despite his earlier bombastic statements, was anxious to reach some accord with the United States, and, therefore, looked forward to seeing Lind reveal the purpose of his mission. The old general now felt that in any negotiations he would be able to deal from a strong

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[27] Cong. Rec., 63 Cong., 1 Sess. (August 6, 7, 9, 1913), 3133-34, 3171-76, 3212-15; New York Times, August 7, 1913, p. 3; ibid., August 8, 9, 1913, p. 2.

[28] Mexican Herald, August 10-13, 1913; New York Times, August 10-13, 1913, p. 1; New York World, August 13, 1913. The correspondence Lind received in his first days in Mexico is too voluminous to cite individually. It is contained in the Lind Papers, Boxes 3 and 14.

position. No doubt he had strengthened his hand in the national capital as a result of his nationalistic pronouncements against outside interference in Mexican internal affairs. Although the financial condition of his government was rapidly deteriorating, his armies were victorious in the field. In early August they captured Zapata's headquarters at Huautla, and the campaign in the South seemed to be gaining momentum. The Federal armies controlled the Northeast and had repulsed Carranza's army at Torreón in the Center and Obregón's at Guaymos in the West. Despite Huerta's lack of religious fervor, the Church and the powerful Catholic Party supported him, because his regime seemed to promise law and order.[29] Lind, therefore, met no resistance when he sought unofficial talks.

Although Lind later had an interview with Huerta, the agent carried on actual negotiations with Foreign Minister Federico Gamboa. Gamboa had just been recalled from his post as Minister to Belgium and had arrived in Mexico almost simultaneously with Lind. The career diplomat's new appointment resulted primarily from Huerta's latest move to eliminate the Felicistas from his cabinet; but it may have also been conditioned by the fact that Gamboa was

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[29] Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitutionalista, I, 150, 196-209; González Ramírez, Las Ideas - La Violencia, 404; Womack, Zapata, 173-76; Rausch, "Huerta," 136-37, 146.

the scion of the Catholic Party, with which the old usurper wished to solidify his relationship.[30] At any rate, the choice was fortunate for the provisional government. Gamboa proved a stubborn but skillful negotiator.

Calling at the Foreign Ministry, Lind first approached Gamboa for unofficial talks on August 12. After formal introductions by O'Shaughnessy, the special agent and the foreign minister conversed for almost an hour. Gamboa was conciliatory. He assured the American agent that the provisional government would give "earnest consideration" to President Wilson's suggestions and urged Lind to reveal the exact nature of his mission as soon as possible, preferably the next day. But he also intimated that no suggestions would be considered that did not include provisions for recognition. Lind, in reply, explained the "spirit" of his instructions, adding that he was certain that President Wilson "did not contemplate recognition under existing circumstances."[31]

The fact that Lind and Gamboa were able to conduct cordial conversations eased much of the tension surrounding

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[30] Mexican Herald, August 7, 1913; Peter Calvert, The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1914: The Diplomacy of Anglo-American Conflict ("Cambridge Latin American Studies," No. 3; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 41-42, 204-205.

[31] Lind to State Department, August 12, 1913/8314; New York World, August 13, 1913; Mexican Herald, August 13, 1913; New York Times, August 13, 1913, p. 1.

the Minnesotan's mission, and Wilson was obviously relieved by the Mexican Foreign Minister's conciliatory attitude. The day after their talk, the President personally drafted new instructions for Lind, directing him to present the proposals to Gamboa. At the same time, he was to emphasize that the United States, having "canvassed" the world powers, was certain that she had "the sympathy and moral support of the governments of Europe." Lind was also to point up to Gamboa that the United States was "offering Mexico the only possible plan by which she may find a way out of her difficulties and avoid worse ones." Failure to comply fully, Wilson added, would be interpreted as a refusal by Huerta to abide by the agreements he made upon assuming power, especially that one calling for early elections.[32]

Wilson persisted in interpreting the terms of the Pact of the Embassy, by which Huerta became provisional president, as he saw fit. He assumed that the portion calling for early elections meant that they should have been held in a matter of weeks after the pact was agreed upon. On May 31, 1913, the Mexican Congress had, indeed, passed a law calling for elections on October 26 that same year. Huerta, assuming that he would reach the peak

[32]State Department to Lind, August 13, 1913/15335a. The note, which was drafted by Wilson on his personal typewriter, was sent under Bryan's signature.

of his power in July, had wanted the elections to be held at that time, but his opponents in the Congress succeeded in postponing them. Wilson seemed ignorant of the fact that elections had been called.[33]

Wilson was bluffing when he claimed European support for his demands. On August 8, the Department of State had sent a circular note to the foreign representatives in Washington, urging their governments' cooperation in obtaining a favorable hearing for the President's proposals. Without knowing what Wilson's exact intentions were, all they could have done was what Great Britain did. Foreign Secretary Edward Grey directed his ambassador in Mexico City, Francis William Stronge, to "unofficially" indicate to the Mexican Government that a refusal to at least hear the proposals of Washington would be a "grave mistake." No nation exerted pressure for the acceptance of Wilson's demands.[34]

Lind was struck by the international implications of his latest instructions. Unaware that Bryan had made representations to the foreign powers, the special agent

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[33]Rausch, "Huerta," 110-11; Vera Estañol, La Revolución Mexicana, 325-26; copy of election law in O'Shaughnessy to State Department, September 3, 1913/8779.

[34]State Department to the representatives of certain foreign powers, August 8, 1913/8284a; Calvert, Diplomacy of Anglo-American Conflict, 204; Grieb, The United States and Huerta, 97-98.

was reluctant to present Wilson's demands as representing the will of other nations. From what information he had gathered, he reported to Washington that it appeared to him that his mission was "considered an unwarranted attempt to dictate in the conduct of Mexican domestic affairs." Gravely concerned over the impression that would result from an outright refusal of his demands, Lind inquired of the Secretary of State what course he should pursue if this occurred. Paradoxically, Lind, with his doubts, suggested also that if he was to present the President's proposals, they should be delivered as an ultimatum, with a four-day time limit sent for the Mexican minister's final reply. Mistakenly assuming that delay would give other nations time to exert pressure for acceptance, Wilson and Bryan refused to fix a time limit for the answer and offered Lind no advice on future moves until they received Huerta's response.[35]

Without knowing how much, if any, foreign support Wilson's proposals would receive, Lind delivered them to Gamboa on August 15, and waited while the minister read the memorandum. His attention drawn to the last paragraph, Gamboa quickly informed Lind that this passage offered Mexico complete justification for submitting a

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[35]Lind to State Department, August 13, 1913, and State Department to Lind, August 14, 1913/8334. Lind recommended that if delivered the President's proposals on Thursday, August 14, he should demand a reply by the following Monday.

counterproposal. He also pointed out that nothing in the document justified the American agent's earlier insistence that recognition was out of the question. He then questioned the good will professed in the document, insisting that the United States encouraged strife in Mexico by sympathizing with the revolutionaries and by not strictly enforcing the arms embargo. Noting the recent debate in the United States Senate, Gamboa also suggested that the proposals did not represent the will of the American people.

In reply, Lind evidenced none of the doubts he had earlier expressed to Washington. He dodged the matter of a counterproposal, but he emphasized that the President's memorandum "implied the impossibility of recognition." He insisted, moreover, that the United States had not knowingly sympathized with the rebels and that the patrol of the border exceeded international requirements. But he was most determined in warning that Mexico should never interpret one Senate debate as evidence of division among the people of the United States. The American people would support their president, he asserted, even to the extent of armed intervention. Veiling his threat somewhat, Lind went on to explain that this frightening prospect had prompted his President to offer his proposed peace settlement. Both diplomats then agreed that the content of the memorandum should remain an absolute secret, and Gamboa

promised a reply the next day. Wilson was heartened by Lind's report of the conversation and congratulated his emissary for his conduct, especially for emphasizing the unity of the American people.[36]

Wilson's optimism was short-lived. On the 16th, through Charge' O'Shaughnessy, Gamboa delivered his lengthy formal reply in which he refused to accede to any of the President's conditions. The note was so polished—"suave," as Lind put it—and polite that the minister's veiled sarcasm was seldom offensive. Gamboa reiterated to Lind, whom he referred to as "Mr. Confidential Agent," all the earlier points he had made concerning recognition and, at the same time, declared as "unfounded" Wilson's charge that no progress was being made toward the establishment of a government in Mexico City which enjoyed the Mexican people's "respect and obedience." In answer, he proclaimed with some exaggeration that twenty-two of twenty-seven states, all three territories, and the Federal District were under the "absolute control of the present government." Wilson, he continued, "is laboring under a serious delusion when he declares that the present situation of Mexico is incompatible with the compliance of [sic] her international obligations." Other nations, he counseled, had seen fit to extend diplomatic recognition,

[36]Lind to State Department, [n.d.] (received August 15, 1913), and State Department to Lind, August 15, 1913/10639.

tender loans, and even continue investing in Mexican industry.

After defending the legality and stability of the provisional government, Gamboa explained why none of Wilson's proposals could be accepted. As if counseling on a point of international law, he emphasized that "Bandits [the revolutionaries], Mr. Confidential Agent, are not admitted into armistice . . . Were we to agree with them to the armistice suggested this would, ipso facto, recognize their belligerency." The request that General Huerta should agree not to appear as a candidate for the presidency, he insisted, "cannot be taken into consideration . . . This point can be decided only by Mexican public opinion. . . ." The pledge that all parties agree beforehand to the results of the election and support the government thus established, he acknowledged, was something to be desired. But his government could not speak for the rebels. Having refused Wilson's propositions, Gamboa, referring to the last paragraph of Wilson's memorandum, offered Huerta's counterproposal: "One, that our Ambassador be received in Washington; two, that the United States of America send us a new ambassador without previous conditions."[37] No compromise was suggested.

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[37]Gamboa to Lind, August 16, 1913, Foreign Relations, 1913, 823-27; Spanish original in Estados Unidos Mexicanos, Poder Ejecutivo, Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, Diario Official, CXXVII (August 27, 1913), 2-4; Lind to Wilson, August 17, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 95.

Rejection had never seriously entered Wilson's thoughts. His administration was totally unprepared for that eventuality. Lind was given no new instructions or guidance for his future relations with the provisional government. In the face of Washington's silence, Lind seized the initiative. On August 18, two days after Gamboa delivered his reply, the American agent again confronted the Foreign Minister. He warned Gamboa that the rejection "was a grave and perilous step." For Mexico to "hope for a division among the American people along partisan lines . . . was utterly futile." When President Wilson, he continued, is "compelled to communicate to the Congress and to the American people . . . all the incidents accompanying the change of government, no American in or out of public life would dare to publicly defend the character of the present government." Rejection of the President's proposal, he further warned, left the United States with three options: one, to alter the neutrality laws to allow Mexicans to purchase arms in the United States; two, to recognize the belligerency of the revolutionaries; and three, armed intervention by the United States. Gamboa would only reply that he thought President Wilson would modify his views after he had an opportunity to read the full text of his rejection note.[38]

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[38]Lind to State Department, August 18, 1913/24649; Lind to State Department, [n.d.], Lind Papers, Box 14. The latter citation is a draft of a telegraphic message sent

Still having received no new directions from Washington, on August 19, Lind, with the aid of the British Minister, arranged a meeting with Huerta. The interview did nothing more than give the general an opportunity to boast of the imminent pacification of the country and to outline his plans for future reforms. Huerta also indicated that he was anxious for the negotiations to continue. Of more significance, the day following the interview, Minister Stronge, having just come from Huerta, called on Lind to relate the general's impressions of the previous night's meeting. For days Stronge had been impressing upon Lind that, in the interests of peace and stability in Mexico, the United States should extend diplomatic recognition to the Huerta regime. This day, in the course of their conversation, Stronge stated unofficially that he believed that a "working agreement" could be arranged with Huerta if the State Department

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between August 16 and 19. The original is not to be found in the State Department files. Several of the messages Lind sent between August 16 and 29 are missing. They apparently were received in Washington, because the Department's Index Bureau assigned them document numbers; but they are absent from the files. In cases where there is a draft in the Lind Papers and corresponding original in the Department files, they are identical in their wording. The drafts for which there is no Department copy, therefore, appear to be accurate and are invaluable in recreating what otherwise seems to be an inexplicable series of events.

would urge American bankers to extend the provisional government a loan. Lind thought the proposal worthy of consideration and reported it to Washington.[39]

Bryan was intrigued by the loan proposal. Ignoring the inconsistency of having denied State Department support for bankers' loans to China,[40] the Secretary of State had recently come to the conclusion that such loans, by promoting economic stability in Latin America, might further political stability. American loans were certainly preferable to loans from other foreign sources. He urged Wilson, therefore, to consider seriously Lind's suggestion. Only a loan "sufficient to meet the temporary requirements of the de facto government" would be necessary. After all, he pointed out, "some government is necessary—without it elections could not be held." In conclusion, he suggested that the offer should be conditioned on acceptance of the

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[39] Lind to State Department, [n.d.] (two), Lind Papers, Box 14.

[40] During the Taft Administration, the State Department had secured American banker participation in an international consortium's attempt to finance the building of railroads in China. In the first days of the Wilson Administration, Bryan had opposed continued American participation in the consortium, insisting that it conferred monopolistic privileges on a few bankers. Wilson concurred, also maintaining that the conditions of the loan seemed an impingement on China's administrative independence. Their decision in this case, however, was not intended to apply to all cases relating to international loans. See Link, New Freedom, 283-86; Roy Watson Curry, Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy, 1913-1921 (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), 18-27.

President's original proposals.[41]

While Wilson and Bryan pondered their next step, Gamboa attempted to seize the initiative. On the 21st, he called upon Lind and informed the special agent that he desired to travel to Washington in order to meet personally with President Wilson. He was positive that he could alter the President's attitude. Lind's first impulse was to believe that Gamboa was sincere, but he counseled that Huerta might be stalling for time.[42] Although Lind only suspected it, stalling was precisely what Huerta had in mind. He was near to consummating a loan with Mexican bankers. The funds, he hoped, would enable him to crush the revolutionaries and leave Wilson no alternative but to extend diplomatic recognition of his regime.[43]

The ruse did not work. Wilson refused to budge an inch. In his first positive move in days, he instructed

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[41]Bryan to Wilson, [n.d.], Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 96. Actually, Bryan would have preferred a policy of having the United States Government extend loans to Latin American nations at 4-1/2 per cent interest, the money to be secured by selling 3 per cent bonds. Wilson did not believe the Congress or the American people would condone such a "novel and radical proposal" and rejected the scheme. As an alternative, Bryan looked to bankers' loans. See Link, New Freedom, 330-31; Paolo Coletta, "Bryan, Anti-Imperialism and Missionary Diplomacy," Nebraska History, XLIV (September, 1968), 179.

[42]Lind to State Department, August 21, 1913/10642.

[43]Calvert, Diplomacy of Anglo-American Conflict, 213; Rausch, "Huerta," 146.

Lind to inform Gamboa that he would be received unofficially in the United States only if his reply to the initial proposals was withdrawn and if he came with the understanding that the attitude of the United States with regard to recognition was unchanged. Wilson also revealed that he was accepting Lind's earlier advice. He notified his agent that he was preparing an address for Congress relating to his Mexican policy and that he intended to include a relation of the recent negotiations. He also noted that, since Gamboa's latest move seemed to indicate that Huerta was softening, he would delay his message several days in order to give Gamboa an opportunity to make concessions.[44]

When on August 24, Gamboa had made no further advances, Bryan directed Lind to proceed with the loan proposal. He also revealed that the President would, indeed, address Congress in two days unless there was a change of attitude in Mexico City.[45] Lind had lost his patience for negotiating; he was ready for a final showdown. Hoping to cow Huerta into submission, he decided to offer the proposals and, if a satisfactory reply was not forthcoming in one day, to depart for Vera Cruz. "I suggest this course," he explained to Bryan, "because I believe it dignified and also because I have become satisfied that

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[44]State Department to Lind, August 22, 1913/10642.

[45]State Department to Lind, August 24, 1913/8526.

silence and action at the opportune time are the most effective arguments. Let the ultimatum be action. They discount words."[46] Lind had hoped to use the British Ambassador as an intermediary in broaching the matter of a loan. When by August 25, Ambassador Stronge had not received permission from his government, Lind submitted a new set of proposals that bore his own mark. He insisted that the elections be held as scheduled and that Huerta should not be a candidate for president. Somewhat more realistically, he also suggested that the other propositions in his original instructions—an immediate armistice and all parties to support a newly elected government—should "be taken up later, but speedily and resolved as circumstances permit." Then he promised that if Huerta would accede to this program, President Wilson would "express to American bankers and their associates assurances that the Government of the United States will look with favor upon the extension of an immediate loan sufficient in amount to meet the temporary requirements of the de facto government of Mexico." At the same time, Lind also informed Gamboa that he would depart for Vera Cruz the next day. Early the next morning, as promised, the special agent boarded the morning train to the coast.[47]

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[46]Lind to State Department, [n.d.], Lind Papers, Box 3.

[47]Lind to State Department, August 25, 1913/24650; Mexican Herald, August 26, 1913.

Huerta was not the least intimidated by Lind's departure, nor by the fact that Wilson planned to address Congress. He felt particularly secure, because negotiations for a 18,000,000 peso domestic loan were drawing to a close, and the old general expected these funds to sustain him until late November.[48] Gamboa's formal reply, which was sent to Vera Cruz aboard the night train of the 26th, the same day as Lind's departure from Mexico City, revealed the confidence of the provisional government. It fairly bristled with sarcasm and innuendo. After refusing to accede to any one of the demands, Gamboa noted the inconsistency of the Wilson Administration: it insisted that as a sovereign nation the United States had the right to withhold diplomatic recognition from certain nations, yet would deny Mexico her sovereignty by interfering in her internal affairs. "If once we were to admit the counsels and advice (let us call them thus) of the United States of America," he remonstrated:

> not only would we . . . forego our sovereignty, but we would as well compromise for an indefinite future our destinies as a sovereign entity and all the future elections for President would be submitted to the veto of any President of the United States. And such an enormity, Mr. Confidential Agent, no government will ever attempt to perpetuate. . . .

Gamboa suggested that the "disproportionate interest"

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[48] Rausch, "Huerta," 146; Turlington, Mexico and Her Foreign Creditors, 253-54; Bazánt, La deuda exterior de México, 179.

President Wilson had evidenced in Mexican internal affairs would lead one to believe that he "would know perfectly well the provisions of our Constitution in the matter of elections." Were this the case, chided Gamboa, the current impasse could have been avoided, since the Constitution prevented "an ad interim President of the Republic from being a candidate at the forthcoming elections." Nor had Huerta done anything, he added to indicate that he was seeking the elective presidency. In conclusion, the Foreign Minister intimated that the loan proposal constituted an attempted bribe. "When the dignity of the nation is at stake," he insisted, "I believe that there are not loans enough to induce those charged by law to maintain it to permit it to be lessened."[49]

At 1:00 p.m., August 27, well before Gamboa's note was completely translated and relayed to Washington, and with only scant knowledge of its contents, Wilson went before Congress and bared the facts—as he saw them—of the Lind Mission. Acknowledging that Huerta had spurned his proposals, he lamented that the United States could not do no more than adopt a waiting policy—"watchful waiting," as the press dubbed it. "We can not thrust our good offices upon them," he concluded. "The steady pressure of moral force will before many days break the barriers of pride and

[49]Gamboa to Lind, August 26, 1913, Foreign Relations, 1913, 832-35; also in Diario Official, CXXVII, 6-8.

prejudice down, and we shall triumph as Mexico's friends sooner than we could triumph as her enemies." Since the violent civil war was bound to intensify south of the border, he urged all Americans to leave Mexico at once. At the same time, he promised to enforce strictly the arms embargo against both sides of the conflict.[50]

While Wilson was addressing Congress, Lind, Consul Canada, and Embassy interpreter, Louis D'Antin, who had come to Vera Cruz, pored over Gamboa's note. Not until 11:00 p.m., the 27th, had D'Antin completed the translation, and only then did Lind grasp the importance of the Mexican Foreign Minister's comments relating to Huerta's eligibility for the presidential election. "Every point contended for in the last note is accepted in fact, though not in form," he triumphantly, if inaccurately, proclaimed in a telegram to Bryan. In Washington, Bryan and Wilson had also grasped the implications of Gamboa's note. Two days before, in fact, David Lawrence of the Associated Press, a reporter close to Wilson, had presented the President with a memorandum, in which he revealed that the Mexican Constitution forbade an ad interim president from succeeding himself as elective president. Lawrence's memorandum and the translation of Gamboa's note, plus Lind's euphoric despatch, struck the President and the Secretary of State with the force of revelation. "Accept my hearty

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[50]New York Times, August 28, 1913, p. 1.

congratulations," Bryan wired his agent.[51] Wilson must also have congratulated himself. By prompting Gamboa to admit this constitutional technicality publicly, the main object of the Lind Mission seemingly had been accomplished. Even the policy of "watchful waiting" which he had outlined to Congress seemed the most reasonable course to follow. The success of his Mexican policy now seemed to hinge only on Huerta's good faith in allowing the elections to proceed as scheduled.

Mexico's impression of Gamboa's note was quite different. On August 28, the provisional government released the complete texts of the Lind-Gamboa exchange, and the press again indulged in an orgy of patriotism. Huerta's popularity was definitely enhanced, but the main hero of the press commentaries was Federico Gamboa. An editorial in El Diario proclaimed that "John Lind thought to come, to see and to conquer, but Federico Gamboa was able to counter and dominate him." El Indepiendente insisted that the Foreign Minister had met the "Colossus of the North" in battle and had driven him from the field. As for Huerta, a writer for El País, ignoring constitutional technicalities, touched the truth when he commented that "President Wilson has not only launched

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[51] Lind to State Department, August 27, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 96; Lawrence to Wilson, August 25, 1913, ibid.; State Department to Lind, August 27, 1913/ 8593.

the candidacy of Huerta, but has advanced it, since should he be proposed, he could find no better argument in his favor than the odium of a Yankee President."[52] Certainly his supporters did not think that Huerta had made any concessions to the United States.

Lind remained confident that Wilson's stand had been a proper one, but he was gravely concerned for the safety of Americans in Mexico City. Press attacks on the United States, plus Wilson's plea for all Americans to leave Mexico, had, indeed, caused a near panic in the American colony. The railway station was crowded with would-be refugees seeking passage to Vera Cruz. The American Consul-General was inundated with requests for financial assistance from those who could not pay their own passage.[53]

Lind was particularly fearful for the safety of William Bayard Hale. Beginning as early as August 12, the Mexico City press had launched a series of attacks on Hale. His advice, it was said, had prejudiced President Wilson against the provisional government and, hence, he was responsible for the strained relations between his country and Mexico. In the United States, Senator Penrose, claiming that he knew Hale personally and considered him a

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[52] Mexican Herald, August 28-31, September 1, 1913; El Imparcial, August 29-31, September 1, 1913; New York World, August 28-31, 1913; El Diario, El Indepiendente, and El País quoted in New York Times, August 30, 1913, p. 2.

[53] New York World, August 29, 30, 1913; Mexican Herald, August 29, 30, 1913.

dishonorable character, siezed upon the Mexican press comments and attempted to embarrass the Administration. When news of Penrose's remarks reached Mexico City, the press called for Huerta to enforce against Hale Article 33 of the Constitution, which allowed the President to deport "pernicious aliens." Hale and Lind were certain that former Ambassador Wilson was behind the attacks, and O'Shaughnessy acknowledged that Wilson had earlier attempted to have Hale arrested by Mexican authorities. Although Bryan directed O'Shaughnessy to appeal to the provisional government for guarantees for this agent's safety, and Gamboa responded favorably, clearly Hale's usefulness as an informant was clearly at an end. On the 26th, he was directed to go to Vera Cruz, then to return to the United States with Lind.[54]

Lind, in the meantime, had expected his precipitous departure from Mexico City to pose enough of a threat to induce Huerta to seek new parleys. When no overtures came from Mexico City, the special agent, on his own

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[54] Cong. Rec., 63 Cong., 1 Sess. (August 15, 1913), 3385-86; Hale to State Department, August 15, 1913/20447; State Department to O'Shaughnessy, August 16, 1913/20447; Lind to State Department, August 16, 1913/8379; Lind to State Department, August 26, 1913, Lind Papers, Box 14; O'Shaughnessy to State Department, August 18, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 96; State Department to Hale, August 26, 1913/10643B; Bryan to Wilson, August 26, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 96; New York Times, August 12, 1913, p. 5; ibid., August 14, 1913, p. 4; ibid., August 16, 1913, p. 3; ibid., August 17, 1913, II, p. 1; ibid., August 18, 1913, p. 5; New York World, August 16, 17, 18, September 1, 1913.

initiative, wired O'Shaughnessy to approach Gamboa and assure the Foreign Minister that he was prepared to return to the capital and re-open the talks. In a disheartening reply, O'Shaughnessy reported that Gamboa could think of no reason for the special agent to come to Mexico City. By this time, also, Bryan and Wilson were concerned that further advances by the United States might be construed as a willingness to make concessions. But they were not willing to give up hope that Lind might ultimately be summoned by Huerta. Instead of calling him home, therefore, Lind was ordered to remain in Vera Cruz and assume the role of an observer, to be available for negotiations only if they were requested by the Mexicans.[55]

Hale was now expendable. At Lind's behest, he agreed to return immediately to Washington, partly because of the antagonism that had developed toward him in Mexico City and partly because both men felt that their impressions of the Mexican situation could best be expressed verbally in a conference with the President and Secretary of State. Certainly Lind trusted Hale to convey his impressions accurately. Indeed, no two agents that Wilson sent to Mexico were more like-minded and compatible than these two. Expressing a need for another agent with whom to

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[55]State Department to Lind, August 26, 27, 1913/ 10634A, 8593; Lind to O'Shaughnessy, August 28, 1913, and O'Shaughnessy to Lind, August 28, 1913, Lind Papers, Box 14.

confide and consult, Lind urged that Hale be returned to Vera Cruz as soon as possible.[56] Wilson, as will be revealed, instead, sent Hale on a diplomatic mission to another part of Mexico. It is a paradox that Lind, the man of action, became a passive observer, while Hale, the more contemplative of the two, became an active diplomat. Thus, the diplomatic phase of Lind's mission was temporarily closed. Now he was left to swelter in the tropical heat of Vera Cruz and serve as Wilson's eyes and ears in Mexico, a task he did not relish, but one that he performed with characteristic conscientiousness.

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[56]Lind to State Department, August 28, 1913/10487; New York World, August 30, 1913.

CHAPTER V

MORE CONFRONTATIONS - MORE REBUFFS

John Lind's residence in Vera Cruz lengthened from an expected few weeks into almost eight months. During that time, "El Manco" (the one-handed one), as the natives called him became a familiar figure throughout the city and was cordially received everywhere. Walking about the city, along the docks, or through the railroad yards, his appearance—he wore dark grey suits and a felt hat—contrasted sharply with the shorter, brown-skinned, cotton-clad, straw sombreroed Mexicans. Lind was regarded with some affection by the Vercruzanos, particularly after he and Mrs. Lind danced in the streets during the Fiesta de Covadonga, the city's biggest annual celebration. At first the Linds lived at the Hotel Terminal, but after Mrs. Lind returned to Minnesota in late October, Lind made a starkly furnished room in the American Consulate his headquarters. Probably to afford himself easier access to his sources of information, he declined an opportunity to live more comfortably aboard Admiral F. F. Fletcher's flagship which was anchored in the harbor.[1]

[1]Stephenson, Lind, 224-25; La Opinión (Vera Cruz), September 9, 1913; San Antonio (Texas) Express, January 18, 1914.

Mexico's largest and busiest port, Vera Cruz was an advantageous location for gathering information. In the course of his daily afternoon walks, Lind often stopped to drink coffee or beer or smoke a cigar with a group of the local inhabitants. From such informal contacts, the agent drew many of the impressions that he forwarded to Washington. He solicited information from a wide variety of people—Mexicans, as well as Europeans and Americans; diplomats and officials, as well as interested private citizens; landowners and businessmen, as well as propertyless laborers and peasants; conservatives as well as radicals. On occasion others sought him out. He received dozens of letters, petitions, and memorandums from anonymous or insignificant persons from all over Mexico. He had numerous visitors at the consulate.[2]

Some of his many conferences with well-known visitors drew considerable publicity. For example, in November, the Ministers of Germany, Norway, and Russia, disturbed by degenerating economic conditions in the Mexican capital, came to Lind and hinted at the advisability of American intervention as a means of restoring order in Mexico. Although they were ostensibly on a hunting trip, the Mexico City press reported the true purpose of their visit to

[2]Lind's contacts and interviews were too numerous to cite individually, but the Lind Papers, Boxes 3, 14, 15, and 16 and the State Department's 812.00 file reveal that Lind drew his information from numerous sources.

Vera Cruz.[3] Many were particularly intrigued by Lind's well publicized conversations with Jesús Flores Magón, whose revolutionary reputation predated the Madero upheaval of 1910-1911. Actually, Flores Magón came to Vera Cruz to plead for the recognition of Huerta as a means of ending Mexico's fraticidal strife.[4]

Lind also harbored numerous fugitives from Huerta's persecution, including several members of the Madero family, and helped some of them escape the country aboard U.S. Navy warships. In fact, Mrs. Lind, upon sailing for the United States, hid two refugees in her stateroom aboard the steamer Morro Castle, while she remained on deck all night during the voyage to Cuba.[5] By mid-December Lind had established confidential relations with Constitutionalist sympathizers in the Vera Cruz region and he brazenly allowed them to frequent the consulate. In March, 1914, he began communicating with agents of Emiliano Zapata.[6] In maintaining such contacts, Lind became a

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[3]Lind to State Department, November 3, 1913/9513; Mexican Herald, November 1-3, 1913; El Imparcial, November 1-3, 1913.

[4]Lind to State Department, January 19, 1914/10600; Mexican Herald, January 20, 27, 1914; El País, January 20, 24, 1914.

[5]Lind to State Department, November 20 (two), 1913, January 23, 27, 1914/9841, 9850, 10652, 10703; Admiral F. F. Fletcher to Navy Department, November 21, 1913, January 31, 1914/9889, 10907; New York Times, October 28, 1913, p. 1; Raul Dehesa y Nuñez, "Yo Conocí a Mr. Lind," Excelsior (Mexico City), February 20, 1954, p. 6.

[6]Lind to State Department, December 12, 13, 1913/

constant source of irritation to officials of the provisional government, and, not surprisingly, the very mention of Lind's name sent Huerta flying into a rage.[7]

Lind also had his regular confidants, men who were perfectly acceptable to Huerta. Charge' O'Shaughnessy was a regular correspondent and Consul Canada was a constant companion while Lind was in Vera Cruz. Both were mildly pro-Huerta, but were loyal to the Administration. Two pro-Huerta businessmen also offered their views regularly: an American, J. J. Slade, and an Englishman, Fred Adams. Adams and Lind became close friends despite the fact that the former was a local agent for British oilman Weetman Pearson, First Viscount Cowdray, whom Lind suspected of providing financial support for the Huerta regime. Embassy counselor-interpreter Louis D'Antin, who was anti-Huerta, provided much information. For anti-government advice, however, Lind relied most heavily upon Loring Olmstead, an American who managed the exclusive British Club in Mexico

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10152, 10170; Testimony of Lind and William W. Canada, April 30, 1920, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 2350-55, 2435-39; Louis M. Teitelbaum, Wilson and the Mexican Revolution, 1913-1916 (New York: Exposition Press, 1967), 143-47; Womack, Zapata, 184. Because of Lind's clandestine activities, Mexican historian Alberto María Carreño has suggested that Huerta would have been justified in having him executed as a spy. See La Diplomacia Extraordinaria entre México y Estados Unidos, II, 276.

[7]Huerta, Memorias, 95; O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 54.

City.[8] Thus, Lind suffered from no dearth of informants and received the widest range of opinion.

Lind's own advice to Washington was endless. Having proven himself a trustworthy servant, his impressions were eagerly received by the President and Secretary of State. To a remarkable degree, Lind, Bryan, and Wilson responded to changing situations in Mexico in the same way, except that Lind's responses were usually more vehement. His voluminous despatches exuded an air of Teutonic superiority—being Scandinavian, he preferred the term Teuton to Anglo-Saxon. Possessing a Midwestern progressive's yearning for honest men and fair play in politics and business, he was naturally outraged by the circumstances which elevated Huerta to power and sustained him there. Yet, his first inclination was to accept conditions as they were. On August 28, shortly after settling in Vera Cruz, he advised Bryan: "I have learned enough of conditions here and learned enough of the Latin character to realize that we cannot expect to make them [Mexicans] conform in any very great degree to our standards in the matter of government . . . The sense of cooperation in government and in business, which is a strong characteristic of the Teutonic race, is utterly wanting in them." Referring to the

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[8]Again, Lind's correspondence with his informants is too voluminous to cite individually. It is contained in the Lind Papers, Boxes 3, 14, 15 and 16 and the State Department's 812.00 file.

upcoming elections of October 26, in which, supposedly, Huerta's successor would be chosen, Lind counseled that "we simply cannot expect elections to be held in the sense they are conducted in the United States. . . Judged by our standards the elections here are a farce." Closing with a note of opprobrium, but recommending no remedial action by the United States, Lind added that "anyone who has had the misfortune to deal with the Irish of our cities . . . has his mind prepared in slight degree to appreciate conditions in Mexico."[9] The special agent's tacit acquiescence did not last. Less than three months later, he was an avowed interventionist. "A worse pack of wolves never infested any community," he wrote of Huerta and the interests who supported him. "Nothing can be done in the way of reconstruction until they are all eliminated. . . ."[10] Lind, nonetheless, began his vigil in Vera Cruz with an almost euphoric outlook.

Throughout the month of September, the Wilson Administration remained optimistic about conditions in Mexico. Huerta, for a change, made an advance to promote better relations. He proposed to send Manuel Zamacona, a retired diplomat who had earlier served as ambassador to the United States, to Washington to serve in a capacity similar to

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[9]Lind to Bryan, August 28, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 120.

[10]Lind to State Department, November 13, 1913/9704.

Lind's. Forwarding the proposal to Washington, O'Shaughnessy reported his conviction that Huerta was "desirous of coming to an understanding with our government" and that the general was "convinced of the impossibility of recognition by the United States."[11] Assuming that Huerta had made an iron-clad commitment to step down after the October elections, Wilson did not think further negotiations with the provisional government were necessary. He, therefore, refused to receive Zamacona. Lind, Wilson, and Bryan were further heartened when, on September 16, Huerta addressed the Mexican Congress and assured the legislators that he would not be a cnadidate for office and that the greatest triumph of his interim government would occur when he relinquished his power to an elected successor. A few days later, in a press interview, the usurper also promised to remain neutral and refrain from endorsing any candidate.[12]

By mid-September several parties had nominated presidential candidates, including the Felicistas, who put forward Felix Díaz. Wilson and Bryan were particularly

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[11] O'Shaughnessy to State Department, September 1, 1913/8648.

[12] O'Shaughnessy to State Department, September 7, 1913/8735; Lind to State Department, September 4, 5, 1913/8671, 10500; State Department to Lind, September 8, 1913/24260a; New York Times, September 6, 1913, p. 2; ibid., September 11, 1913, p. 3; ibid., September 12, 1913, p. 8. Wilson remained undecided about receiving Zamacona until the Mexican diplomat arrived in New York, but then informed him that it would be useless for him to go to Washington.

encouraged when the Catholic Party nominated Federico Gamboa. Despite the harsh words the nationalistic diplomat had leveled at them, the President and Secretary of State had been impressed by Lind's favorable characterization of Gamboa and announced that they would recognize him if he was elected.[13] So comforted was Bryan that he wrote to Wilson: "It seems to me that things are going quite well at present and we have only to sit tight and await the election." Again the Secretary of State congratulated Lind on the success of his mission, suggesting that the whole turn of events was the result of the agent's diplomacy.[14]

In the last days of September, this euphoria began to evaporate. Hale, who had returned to Washington and was serving as a resident counselor on Mexican affairs, noted that even if the elections were held as scheduled, the results might prove unsatisfactory for the United States. The liberals in the Mexican Congress, he insisted, would

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[13] F. D. Roosevelt (Assistant Secretary of the Navy) to Bryan, forwarding radiogram from Lind, September 15, 1913/10502; Lind to State Department, September 16, 1913/8880; O'Shaughnessy to State Department, September 16, 1913/8867; State Department to Lind, September 18, 22, 26, 1913/8880, 10645A, 10645B; Bryan to Wilson, September 17, 1913, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; Mexican Herald, September 17, 22, 1913; El Diario, September 26, 1913; New York Times, September 17, 1913, p. 3; Rausch, "Huerta," 144.

[14] Bryan to Wilson, September 25, 1913, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; State Department to Lind, September 26, 1913/10645B.

oppose Gamboa, because he represented the conservative Catholic Party. Hale also pointed out that the revolutionaries had announced their refusal to either participate in the election or abide by the results. "It seems to me," he warned, "that to eliminate Huerta and yet leave Mexico in disorder is a small practical gain." There was no assurance,moreover, that the usurper would be eliminated by the elections. Among the options available to the national Chamber of Deputies, should no candidate receive a majority, was nullification of the election results. If the elections were voided, Hale revealed, Huerta would remain in power. Hale suggested that one possible way to avoid these eventualities was to secure Constitutionalist participation in the elections. The Liberals in the Chamber of Deputies, he assured Wilson, desired Constitutionalist participation and would likely support their candidate. "So far as I know," he quizzed the President, "our government has made no approached to the Revolutionaries. Ought we not do so?"[15]

Hale's revelations stirred the President into immediate action. Having ignored the Constitutionalists since June, he suddenly recognized their disruptive potential. On October 1, Wilson personally drafted a telegram, which Bryan relayed to Lind, directing the special agent to

[15]Hale to Wilson, [n.d.], Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 97.

contact leaders in the Mexican Congress and urge them to make an "earnest and sincere effort" to induce the rebels to participate in the coming elections. Within three days, Lind was able to report that certain legislators were, indeed, encouraging the revolutionaries to vote. Not satisfied with this indirect approach, Lind also suggested that the Administration appeal directly to the rebel leaders.[16]

Wilson was already moving in that direction. At the same time he instructed Lind to contact the Mexican legislators, the President apparently directed Hale to establish communications with Constitutionalist agents in Washington. The records reveal no written instructions by Wilson, but the report of the conversations between Hale and the Constitutionalist agent, M. Perez Romero, which Romero sent to Carranza, reveals that the American agent was directed to take a hard line. President Wilson favored Gamboa to win the upcoming presidential election, Hale informed the Constitutionalists, and, if he won and the elections appeared to be legally conducted, he would receive the moral support of the United States. Hale then indicated that Wilson believed that the Constitutionalists had been justified in revolting against the Huerta regime, but he also

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[16]Wilson to Bryan, October 1, 1913/9583; State Department to Lind, October 1, 1913/10645C; Lind to State Department, October 2, 4, 1913/10646, 9563.

insisted that the elections of October 26 should eliminate any justification for continued revolution. In conclusion, Hale counseled that his president wanted Mexicans to learn to use votes instead of bullets to win their political battles.[17]

The implications of Hale's comments was clear. Wilson had thrown down the gauntlet to the Constitutionalists: participate in the elections and accept the results, even if a conservative such as Gamboa was elected president, or suffer the odium of having their cause repudiated by the United States. But Wilson had misgauged Venustiano Carranza's nationalism and pertinacity of purpose. The First Chief was greatly incensed by the American president's latest attempt to dictate the course of Mexican politics. Without once mentioning the elections, but obviously declining to participate in them, he instructed his agent to inform Hale that, as the leader of the Constitutionalist revolution, he alone would decide what was best for his country and that his "line of conduct" would not change.[18]

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[17] S. Gil Herrera a Carranza [n.d.], AGRE, L-E-861, Leg. 5; M. Perez Romero a Carranza, September 30, October 3, 1914, ibid.; Fabela, Historia Diplomatica de la Revolución Mexicana, I, 243-244. S. Gil Herrera was an alias for Sherbourne G. Hopkins, an Anglo-American, who served as Constitutionalist commercial agent and legal counsel.

[18] Carranza to Romero, October 6, 1913, AGRE, L-E-861, Leg. 5.

Having mistakenly ignored the Constitutionalists for months, Wilson should now have known that the rebels were not only unwilling to compromise with their political enemies but were determined to continue fighting until they were all eliminated. His future relations with the revolutionaries, however, reveal that he had not learned this lesson. As yet he did not fully understand their lack of faith in the electoral process. Instead, he looked to those who seemingly respected democratic processes and hoped that they would elect a government which he could recognize.

Events in Mexico City during the month of October proved most disillusioning for Wilson. Constitutionalist sympathizers in the national Chamber of Deputies—mostly holdovers from the Madero regime—became increasingly defiant of Huerta. Having recently blocked several of the usurper's appointments, they grew more brazen after Senator Belisario Domínguez, who had openly called for Huerta's removal, mysteriously disappeared. When he was found murdered several days later, the Chamber of Deputies launched an investigation. Already pressed by unrest in the national capital, the Huertistas were further stunned when, on October 8, the rebel armies under General Francisco Villa overran Torreón, the key to the Federals' northern defenses. It was by far the most impressive rebel victory to date, and it encouraged the Constitutionalist

sympathizers in the Chamber to circulate petitions calling for Huerta's ouster. They even threatened to completely disrupt the government by endorsing a resolution to disband the Cahmber and reconvene elsewhere, presumably in rebel-held territory.[19]

After lengthy discussions, Huerta and his cabinet agreed that only ruthless action could forestall an insurrection in the capital city. On October 10, therefore, Huerta packed the galleries of the Chamber with secret police and surrounded the hall with soldiers. When the Deputies refused even to reconsider their recent actions, 110 of the legislators were arrested on the grounds that they were attempting to usurp executive power and were acting in collusion with the revolutionaries. The next day Huerta assumed dictatorial powers and announced that a new Congress would be chosen in the upcoming elections.[20]

By unfortunate coincidence, the day Huerta assumed dictatorial powers, Sir Lionel Carden, the new British

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[19] O'Shaughnessy to State Department, October 8, 10, 11, 1913, Foreign Relations, 1913, 835-36; Rausch, "Huerta," 148-53; Vera Estañol, La Revolución Mexicana, 337-39; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitutionalista, I, 263-67.

[20] O'Shaughnessy to State Department, October 10, 1913 (three)/9166, 9167, 9168; O'Shaughnessy to State Department, October 11, 1913 (two), Foreign Relations, 1913, 836-37; Mexican Herald, October 11, 1913; Vera Estañol, La Revolución Mexicana, 339-41; Sherman and Greenleaf, Victoriano Huerta, 105-107; José Mancisidor, Historia de la Revolución Mexicana (México, D.F.: Ediciones el Gusano de Luz, 1958), 198-200.

Minister, arrived in Mexico City and presented his credentials. Lind did not think it a coincidence. He saw the makings of a monstrous conspiracy. The American agent had been on hand to greet the new minister when he arrived in Vera Cruz. In the course of their conversations, Carden had revealed great admiration for Huerta and had even suggested that the old general was the only man strong enough to restore order in Mexico. He had also been outspokenly critical of Wilson's nonrecognition policy, claiming that it encouraged revolution and was largely responsible for the heavy losses suffered by British investors in Mexico. Lind was aroused by the crass materialism implied in Carden's remarks. But even more incriminating in Lind's eyes was the fact that the minister had been greeted at Vera Cruz not by a legation official but by Fred Adams, the local agent for Lord Cowdray's El Aguila Oil Company.[21] Incriminating, because weeks before Carden's arrival, Lind had reported his conviction that British oil interests were angling for favorable treatment from Huerta and were urging him to be a candidate for president.[22] Lind

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[21] Mexican Herald, October 12, 1913; Lind to State Department, October 8, 1913/9127; Calvert, Diplomacy of Anglo-American Conflict, 225-26, 233. Actually the British Charge' d'Affaires had gone to Vera Cruz to meet the new minister, but Carden disembarked aboard the pilot boat. Before the charge' could locate him, Carden had been greeted by Cowdray's agent and had conferred with Lind.

[22] F. D. Roosevelt to Bryan, transmitting radiogram from Lind, September 15, 1913/10502. In this despatch,

assumed, moreover, that Carden, by presenting his credentials when he did, signified England's moral approval of the dictatorship.[23]

Lind quickly became obsessed by the specter of British duplicity. The arrival of Carden at the same time Huerta assumed dictatorial power, he wrote to Bryan, "was no accident. I believe the whole was carefully planned."[24] Almost two weeks elapsed before Lind unraveled the threads of what he thought to be an evil plot. But the day after his conversations with Carden, he reported the bare bones of his hypothesis: "Lord Cowday [sic] through Adams controls Huerta Administration absolutely."[25] Basing his assumptions on rumors and reports from American oilmen, including J. N. Galbraith, a representative of Standard Oil, Lind came to the conclusion that Lord Cowdray's money kept Huerta in power. In return for his support, Cowdray was demanding new concessions which would enable him to deliver oil to the Royal Navy under fifty to one hundred year contracts. Having recently converted to an oil burning navy, and being dependent upon Mexican oil, the British Cabinet, Lind believed, had readily acceded to Cowdray's

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Lind refers to the "largest interest in Mexico not American," which was British.

[23]Lind to State Department, October 15, 1913/9218.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Lind to State Department, October 8, 1913/9127.

demand that their ineffective minister in Mexico City, Francis Stronge, be replaced with the oil man's hand-picked tool, Sir Lionel Carden. Fearing the disruptive potential of the rebel sympathizers in the Mexican legislature, Cowdray and Carden had insisted upon the establishment of a dictatorship. The ultimate end of the conspiracy, the American agent insisted, was the complete control and monopoly of the Mexican oil fields and oil business by the British. To insure the success of this scheme, Carden would find some means of maintaining Huerta in power despite the upcoming elections.[26]

The results of those elections served to confirm Lind's suspicions. As election day approached, Huerta's own intentions, at least, did become apparent. Instructions were sent to state governors and local jefes políticos, directing them to insure that the polling places were manned by loyal Huertistas. Although he was not an official candidate, leaflets urging the electorate to vote for Huerta appeared everywhere. Felix Díaz, who returned to Vera Cruz on October 23, in order to stand for election as prescribed in the Pact of the Embassy, passed this information on to Lind and, in counseling the agent, prophesied that the elections would be so well managed that Huerta

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[26]Lind to State Department, October 15, 16, 23, 25, 1913/9218, 10647, 9355, 9401.

would receive an overwhelming majority.[27] Apathy on the part of the electorate and Huertista intimidation in some areas did result in an exceedingly small voter turnout on election day. Although Huerta received a majority of the votes cast, the total did not meet constitutional minimums and it was generally conceded that the election results would be nullified.[28]

Ignoring his earlier counsels to Wilson and Bryan that they should not expect Mexican elections to conform to Anglo-American standards, Lind condemned the fraud and intimidation. More importantly, he insisted that the election results were part of a conspiracy in which the British were deeply implicated.[29] His analysis had little basis in fact. To be sure, Huerta had managed the elections and was determined to remain in power, but the supposed British determination to sustain him there, in

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[27]Lind to State Department, October 23, 26, 27, 28, 1913/9355, 9406 (two), 9441; Rausch, "Huerta," 181-82; Sherman and Greenleaf, Huerta, 108-109. Díaz was closely watched by Huerta's police and was a virtual prisoner in his hotel. When the results of the election went against him, Díaz and an aid crawled across the hotel roof and gained asylum in the American Consulate, which was located immediately next door. Lind and Canada then escorted Díaz to an American warship, from which the general transferred to a commercial steamer and went into exile. See Canada to State Department, October 27, 1913/9418; Mexican Herald, October 29, 30, November 2, 1913.

[28]Mexican Herald, October 27, 1913; New York Times, October 27, 1913, p. 1.

[29]Lind to State Department, October 26 (two), 27, 1913/9392, 9406, 9415.

defiance of Wilson's wishes, and to monopolize the Mexican oil industry, was a fiction derived from rumors and false information provided by American competitors. Lord Cowdray did have influence in the majority Liberal Party in England, but he did not exert pressure on the cabinet in behalf of Carden's appointment. Minister Stronge's failing health, plus the need for a diplomat with abundant experience in Latin America, were the primary considerations behind the choice of Carden, who had served at various consular and diplomatic posts in Latin America since 1877. Nor was there valid evidence that Cowdray took advantage of Huerta's diplomatic difficulties with the United States to press for larger concessions. The opposite seems to have been the case. More likely, Huerta was exerting pressure on the British oil man by using his intersts in Mexico as a hostage to secure monetary support. Only in one respect was Lind correct. The British Cabinet, Cowdray, and Carden were primarily concerned with the protection of English material interests in Mexico and believed Huerta the most capable of guaranteeing their safety.[30]

However faulty Lind's notions might have been, the important point is that Wilson and Bryan believed him,

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[30]Calvert, Diplomacy of Anglo-American Conflict, 216-84. Calvert utilizes recently available British Foreign Office records in revealing the true intentions of Cowdray and the Foreign Office.

primarily because his suppositions were supported by others. As early as April, 1913, the possible connection between England's recognition of the Huerta government and her oil interests had been discussed at one of Wilson's Cabinet meetings. In August, Boaz Long, Chief of the Latin American Division of the State Department, after a secret conference with Henry Clay Pierce, had reported the American oil man's conviction that England had recognized Huerta at Cowdray's insistence. At almost the same time Lind began his tirades against the British, the New York World published an exposé which charged that Cowdray had dictated the appointment of Carden as the man best qualified to protect and expand British oil intersts.[31] The upshot of all these faulty suppositions was that Wilson launched campaigns of diplomatic pressure designed to force the British Cabinet to give up its alleged Mexican policy and to unseat Huerta immediately.

Wilson's campaign against the British produced positive results. He began on an almost belligerent note. In an address delivered on October 27, to the Southern Commercial Congress at Mobile, Alabama, he attacked concessionaires as the instigators of most of the strife in Latin America. Obviously directing his comments at the British, he suggested that the United States would aid the people of Latin

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[31]Cronon, Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, 43-44; Long to Bryan, August 26, 1913/8693-1/2; New York World, October 21, 23, 24, 25, 1913.

America in freeing themselves from the yoke of commercial oppression by foreign business interests. Through the press and official diplomatic channels, he let the British know in no uncertain terms that he believed them to be taking undue advantage of the chaos in Mexico to gain preeminence in the oil business. Alarmed by these angry outbursts, the British Cabinet moved quickly to mollify the American President. Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey helped clear the air by dispatching his private secretary, Sir William Tyrell, to Washington for conferences with Wilson and Bryan. At the same time, Grey and Lord Cowdray made representations to the American Ambassador, Walter Hines Page. The Foreign Secretary even instructed Carden to attempt to mediate between the United States and Huerta; but the usurper refused the good offices of the British. At any rate, Huerta now knew he would receive no support from Great Britain in his conflict with President Wilson.[32]

The British Government never withdrew diplomatic recognition of the Huerta regime, but by early December, 1913, the Foreign Office had made it abundantly clear to Wilson that Lord Cowdray had little influence in formulating

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[32]Link, New Freedom, 369-77; Calvert, Diplomacy of Anglo-American Conflict, 254-84; Walter V. Scholes and Marie V. Scholes, "Wilson, Grey and Huerta," Pacific Historical Review, XXXVII (May, 1968), 151-58; William S. Coker, "Mediación Britanica en el conflicto Wilson - Huerta," Historia Mexicana, XVIII (October-December, 1968), 249-50.

British foreign policy or in choosing His Majesty's diplomatic representatives, that British policy with regard to Mexico had never been designed to thwart his purposes, and that Great Britain would never support Huerta against the United States.[33] Lind, nonetheless, persisted in seeing a British plot to maintain Huerta in power and enhance their material interests. When Lind continued to report that Carden was hatching plots in Mexico City, Bryan asked for concrete evidence of British wrongdoing. Lind could only reply: "My evidence against Carden is not of a character cognizable in a court of justice." He based his charges, he revealed, on "the general sentiment that pervades the atmosphere so to speak and little incidents that occur from day to day." Falling back upon his reputation for personal integrity, the Minnesotan pleaded for understanding: "While I am not in a position to prove my assertions, I am morally certain that I have in no instance overstated the facts."[34] Certainly Wilson and Bryan did not doubt their agent's sincerity, but since he could not prove his assertions, his anti-British tirades were thereafter ignored.

Other European nations soon followed England's example, especially after Wilson sent notes to the powers revealing that he was determined to deny Huerta all foreign

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[33] Lind, New Freedom, 377.

[34] State Department to Lind, December 16, 1913/10185; Lind to State Department, December 17, 1913/10239.

sympathy, material aid, and credit. Although none of them withdrew its recognition of the provisional government or evidenced any sympathy for Wilson's moralistic policy, they were careful to determine the attitude of the United States in formulating their own policies toward Mexico. The result was the virtual diplomatic isolation of the Huerta regime.[35]

Meanwhile, Wilson had also exerted pressure directly on Huerta. In doing so, he inexplicably bypassed Lind and, on November 1, sent an ultimatum to Huerta through the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, demanding that the dictator retire immediately or face possible intervention.[36] Only three days before, O'Shaughnessy had conferred with Foreign Minister Querido Moheno, who revealed that, because of faltering finances, the provisional government's position was becoming increasingly untenable. O'Shaughnessy also got the impression that the Mexican Cabinet thought the retirement of Huerta might serve the best interests of Mexico. "I am of the opinion," he wrote to Bryan, "that if you make suggestions to the administration in Mexico City in such a manner as to save their amour propre (for any man who listens to the dictation of the United States

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[35]Link, New Freedom, 377, 386-87; Grieb, United States and Huerta, 113-17; Cline, United States and Mexico, 148-53.

[36]State Department to American Embassy, November 1, 1914/11443a.

is ruined politically) such suggestions will be listened to and substantially followed." That same day, he also spoke with Huerta's private secretary and received the same impression.[37] Wilson's ultimatum of November 1 was hardly suited to allow the dictator to bow out with honor; the charge', therefore, withheld the full impact of Wilson's new demands and began secret parleys with the Minister of Foreign Relations.[38]

With O'Shaughnessy making so many visits to the Foreign Ministry, the rumor inevitably emerged that Wilson's Mexican policy had taken a new turn. Wishing to maintain the secrecy of his efforts, O'Shaughnessy staunchly denied the rumors. Bryan, approving of the charge's course of action, also issued a denial. But when Lind was informed of the proceedings in Mexico City, he immediately wired for permission to participate in the negotiations. Upon receiving such permission from the Secretary of State, Lind inadvertently sabotaged O'Shaughnessy's efforts by revealing to a reporter of the Mexican Herald that the United States had, indeed, made new advances to the Huerta government. Secret parleys no longer possible, Foreign Minister Moheno notified the charge' that, since it would appear to be a surrender to Yankee pressure and thus a

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[37]O'Shaughnessy to State Department, October 30, 1913 (two)/9469, 9474.

[38]O'Shaughnessy to State Department, November 3, 1913/ 9510; O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 32.

blow to Mexican sovereignty, no agreement could be made at that time. The dejected American charge' naturally blamed Lind for the failure to secure Huerta's resignation.[39]

Lind, still hopeful of a confrontation with Huerta, went to Mexico City anyway, arriving there on November 7. His conduct in November was decidedly different from what it had been at the outset of his mission in August. Then he had conducted himself as a man of peace and goodwill. In November, however, he was brusque with everyone and no longer cared if his actions were considered an unwarranted breach of Mexican sovereignty. Noting that the members of the diplomatic corps and foreign colony feared, above all else, the destructive possibilities of a revolutionary victory, he delighted in taunting them with threats of a possible lifting of the twenty-month old embargo on American arms sales to Mexico. With access to weapons, Lind threatened, the Constitutionalists would make short work of Huerta and all his supporters, natives and foreigners alike.[40]

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[39]State Department to O'Shaughnessy, November 2, 1913/9564E; Lind to State Department, November 2, 1913/9507; State Department to Lind, November 5, 1913/9568; O'Shaughnessy to State Department, November 6, 1913/9598; Mexican Herald, November 4-6, 1913; New York Times, November 6, 1913, p. 1; O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 33-34, 39.

[40]New York Times, November 9-11, 1913, p. 1; ibid., November 12, 1913, p. 2; Testimony of Nelson O'Shaughnessy, May 3, 1920, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 2710; O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 40-46.

Of course Lind's hostility for the British was boundless, especially after Huerta greeted his return to Mexico City with a defiant circular note addressed to all the powers, in which he denounced the latest American attempt to unseat him. The day before the dictator's outburst, Lind conferred with Carden and, during the course of their conversation, the minister told the American agent that it did not seem reasonable to expect Huerta to "efface himself" by resigning under pressure. Taking his cue from Carden's comments, Lind reported his conviction that the usurper's renewed defiance was British inspired. He insisted, also, that Carden's newest scheme was to have Huerta install the Congress chosen in the inconclusive October elections and allow it to validate British and other European concessions. These validations, supposedly, would guarantee Huerta increased revenue and European support.[41]

Lind's long sought direct confrontation with Huerta never took place. Harried by Wilson's new demands, rumblings in his own cabinet, and deteriorating national finances, Huerta, as he often did, escaped his miseries by taking to the bottle. With the old general hiding among the many cafes and bars of Mexico City, Lind had to be content in conferring with his private secretary,

[41]Lind to State Department, October 30, November 5, 7, 8, 9, 1913/9491, 9565, 9619, 11440, 9523.

Jesús M. Rábago. At a meeting arranged by the German Minister, the special agent insisted that both Huerta and the recently elected congress must resign. Rábago replied that Huerta's resignation could be accomplished only in a manner that would allow him to bow out with dignity and that it would be impractical to disband the new congress and leave the nation without a legislature. Both the Belgian and German Ministers, who were present, agreed with Rábago, but Lind remained immovable. His judgment increasingly affected by his personal hatred for Huerta, the special agent complained to Washington that "were it not for the fact that we are dealing with a man who is little less than a madman much of the time an adjustment could be arrived at."[42]

Attempting once again to badger the provisional government into making concessions, on November 12, Lind delivered his own ultimatum. Huerta, he demanded, was to guarantee that the recently elected congress would not convene, then he was to resign. Exceeding his instructions, Lind further demanded that the dictator agree to these terms by 6 p.m. that same day and carry them out completely by 12 midnight or face a complete rupture in diplomatic relations with the United States. When no reply was forthcoming, Lind packed his bags and returned to Vera Cruz. O'Shaughnessy, on the other hand, refused to give

[42]Lind to State Department, November 12, 1913/9677.

up hope. He continued to negotiate with members of Huerta's cabinet. President Wilson, moreover, showed no inclination to completely sever relations with the Huerta regime.[43]

Wilson, however, was no longer willing to rely entirely upon diplomatic pressure as a means of ousting the dictator. Even while O'Shaughnessy and Lind were seeking Huerta's resignation, Wilson renewed his efforts to secure cooperation from the Constitutionalists. In September Carranza had moved his headquarters from the state of Coahuila to a safer location at Hermosillo, Sonora. There he established his own provisional government. Late in October, therefore, Wilson sent Hale to Tucson, Arizona, to secretly locate himself near the Constitutionalist headquarters. Should Huerta have resigned, the special agent would have conferred directly with Carranza and attempted to persuade the rebels to participate in creating a new provisional government in Mexico City.[44]

Adopting a fictitious name, Hale spent several days

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[43]Lind to State Department, November 11, 12, 1913/9675, 9677; O'Shaughnessy to State Department, November 12, 1913/9680; New York Times, November 13, 1913, p. 2; El País, November 15, 1913; O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 47-48.

[44]Bryan to Wilson and Wilson to Bryan, October 24, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 98; Bryan to Wilson, [n.d.], ibid.; Hale's intinerary, ibid., Box 101; William Jennings Bryan, Jr., to State Department, October 30, 1913/9745. The son of the Secretary of State, who lived near Tucson, served as Hale's intermediary while the special agent temporarily hid his identity.

quietly inquiring of the strength and character of the Constitutionalist movement. He added these impressions to those he had received from inquiries in El Paso, Texas, and reported his conviction that the revolutionaries were much stronger and more unified than was generally believed in Washington. Support from the United States, he noted in his first despatch to Wilson, might provide them with an added incentive to step up their military effort. On November 5, his investigations were interrupted when he was recognized by a newspaper reporter. In order to maintain the secrecy of his mission, he fled Tucson for the seclusion of a nearby ranch owned by the father-in-law of William Jennings Bryan, Jr. But once it became apparent in Washington that Huerta would not accede to Wilson's latest demands, and since Hale had been discovered on the border, the Secretary of State abandoned any pretense of secrecy and ordered the agent to await new instructions in Tucson.[45]

When the new instructions came, they marked a definite change of attitude on Wilson's part. The recent series of events in Mexico City had hardened his Puritan will and made him more determined than ever to eliminate Huerta.

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[45]Bryan to Wilson, [n.d.], Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 98; Hale to State Department, November 5, 9, 1913/10195; Wilson to Bryan, November 7, 1913, Wilson-Bryan Correspondence; Bryan to William Jennings Bryan, Jr., November 8, 1913/10648C; Tucson Daily Citizen, November 7, 11, 1913; New York Times, November 7, 1913, p. 1.

After the usurper's latest rebuff, for a time he considered armed intervention, at least to the extent of blockading Mexican ports. Secretary of War Lindley M. Garrison supported intervention, but Secretary of the Treasury William G. McAdoo and Attorney General James C. McReynolds were reluctant to use military force. They suggested, as an alternative, recognition of the belligerency of the Constitutionalists and a lifting of the arms embargo. From Vera Cruz, Lind graphically spelled out the advantages of such a policy. He insisted that only a military victory by the rebels would completely eliminate all the elements supporting the Huerta regime. The military forces of the United States, he concluded:

> . . . could defeat but . . . could neither humble nor humiliate them. This can only be done by their own people, their own blood, the people of the North. They can do it to perfection if given a fair chance. To make a dog feel that he really is a cur he must be whipped by another dog preferably by a cur. Consequently let this house-cleaning be done by home talent.[46]

Even before Lind submitted his colorful comments, Wilson had decided to offer aid to the Constitutionalists. On about November 11, he directed Bryan to instruct Hale, who was still in Tucson, to inform the Constitutionalist leaders that the Administration in Washington was contemplating lifting the embargo on the sale of arms to Mexico.

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[46]Link, New Freedom, 380; Cronon, Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, 83; Lind to State Department, November 15, 1913/9760.

But at the same time, Hale was to issue this stern warning:

> We desire above all else to avoid intervention. If the lives and interests of Americans and all other foreigners are safeguarded we believe intervention may be avoided. If not we anticipate that we will be obliged to intervene. We are confident that the leaders of the North will give us no motive to intervene in their territory.[47]

By issuing this warning, Wilson doubtless was attempting to forestall the growth of interventionist sentiment among foreigners with investments in Mexico. But he may also have wanted the Constitutionalists to make some limited commitment to abide by his wishes.

With rumors of a possible lifting of the embargo circulating in Washington and on the border, Carranza's earlier demonstrated reluctance to treat with the Wilson Administration diminished. The road toward more cordial relations had also been paved by Dr. Henry Aller Tupper, Director of the International Peace Forum. An old friend of Bryan, Tupper, in early November, was completing his

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[47] El Secretario del Estado a William Bayard Hale, [n.d.], AGRE, L-E-861, Leg. 5 (English translation by author). Wilson's biographer Arthur S. Link cites a pencil draft of the above instructions, dated November 11, 1913. See New Freedom, 382. This author was unable to locate the draft in the Wilson Papers. The note cited above apparently was translated into Spanish and presented to the Constitutionalists by Hale.

Bryan wanted former Democratic governor of Missouri, Joseph W. Folk, who was currently Solicitor of the State Department, to join Hale for the negotiations with the Constitutionalists, but Wilson vetoed this move. The President did not want anyone officially connected with the State Department to be involved. See Bryan to Wilson [n.d.], Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 98; Wilson to Bryan, November 7, 1913, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence.

third junket into Northern Mexico. Although his avowed purpose was to mediate between the revolutionaries and the provisional government, he established a very close relationship with Carranza—indeed, in time, he became completely enamored of the Constitutionalist cause. Before entering Mexico the second time in June, he had asked Bryan for a letter of introduction. There is no record of such a letter being issued; nonetheless, the self-styled peace commissioner reported his findings to the Secretary of State by periodically issuing an open letter to the press. On November 1, he wired Bryan from Nogales that the Constitutionalists had authorized him to offer a proposition in their name. In reply, Bryan refused to receive the offer as being official, but stated that he would be pleased to have any information that the peace commissioner cared to report. On November 2, therefore, Tupper directed one of his statements to the press, proclaiming Carranza's eagerness to buy arms in the United States, along with the rebels' promise to respect the lives and property of foreigners. This declaration clearly anticipated the purpose of Hale's instructions. Carranza, meanwhile, knowing that Wilson's agent was in Tucson, underlined his willingness to negotiate by moving his headquarters to the border at Nogales, Sonora.[48]

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[48]Bryan to Wilson, June 16, 1913, Bryan Papers, Box 43; Tupper to Bryan, November 1, 1913, and Bryan to Tupper, November 2, 1913/9499; William Jennings Bryan, Jr., to

After holding preliminary conferences with Constitutionalist agents in Tucson, Hale motored to Nogales on November 11, where he was cordially greeted by Carranza's Sub-Minister of Fomento (Public Works), Ignácio Bonillas, a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who served as an intermediary between Hale and Carranza. Later that same day, the American agent crossed the border in the company of the American Consul, Frederick R. Simpich, and held a preliminary conference with Carranza and Bonillas. As if to clear the air before entering into official parleys, the ever cautious First Chief reiterated his earlier stated determination never to accept Huerta or any remnant of his regime. He then acknowledged that the next day he and the members of his cabinet would be willing to discuss other matters.[49]

State Department, November 2, 1913/9506; El Paso Morning Times, November 1, 8, 1913; Tucson Daily Citizen, November 4, 6, 9, 1913; New York Times, November 3, 1913, p. 3. In August, 1914, after Huerta had been eliminated, Bryan suggested to Wilson that Tupper make official representations to Carranza in behalf of the State Department. At that time, however, the President was reluctant to engage any more special agents and declined the Secretary's proposition. As Wilson put it, Tupper was likely to go to Mexico "on his own hook" anyway and, despite his lack of official character, would probably report his findings to Washington. See Bryan to Wilson, August 22, 1914, and Wilson to Bryan, August 26, 1914, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence. For the nature of his visits to Mexico, see testimony of Henry Allen Tupper, September 19, 1919, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 497-528.

[49]Hale to State Department, November 11, 12, 14, 1913/9668, 9674, 9735; El Paso Morning Times, November 12, 1913; Tucson Daily Citizen, November 12, 1913.

The conference of November 12 was held in a sparsely decorated, drab little room in the Mexican border customs house. Sensing that the future conduct of the Constitutionalist revolution was the matter at issue, crowds of curious observers gathered on both sides of the border, hoping to hear or, at least, see the proceedings. A cordon of Constitutionalist troops kept the spectators out of hearing range, but through the open windows they could see the patriarchal figure of Carranza as he expounded, gesturing with his hands for emphasis, while Simpich and Bonillas huddled near Hale, quietly interpreting the First Chief's comments. The impression that reporters received from their observations was that the meeting proceeded quite amicably.[50]

Certainly Hale felt that Wilson's proposals had been cordially received. Carranza and his lieutenants immediately expressed their eagerness to receive arms from the United States and seemed most sincere in promising to protect foreign lives and property. They were temporarily disconcerted by Wilson's threat of intervention, but after they had fully digested the prospects offered

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[50] El Paso Morning Times, November 12, 1913; Tucson Daily Citizen, November 13, 15, 1913; New York Times, November 13, 1913, p. 1. Isidro Fabela locates this first meeting at the Hotel Escobosa in Hermosillo. State Department records and newspapers locate the meeting at Nogales. See Fabela, Historia Diplomática de la Revolución Mexicana, I, 246.

by the special agent, they seemed quite gratified and Carranza personally expressed his satisfaction. Careful to accurately represent the Constitutionalists' attitude, Hale agreed to submit his report of the meeting to Carranza for editing before forwarding it to Washington.[51]

While awaiting the First Chief's revisions, the special envoy began reporting his impressions of the revolutionary leaders. His characterizations were more favorable than those offered a few months before by Reginald Del Valle. Hale was struck by what he called their "moral enthusiasm." "With few exceptions," he revealed, "the leaders are plain men, their speech is remarkable for Quaker-like conscientiousness and precision . . . There is no mistaking the settled determination of these men and their complete confidence in ultimate complete success." Noting that they were determined to make the current upheaval Mexico's last, Hale concluded that "these men are plainly bent on complete political and social revolution. . . ." The special agent offered the following characterization of the First Chief:

> Carranza is positive character, huge slow-moving body and mind. He is deferred to absolutely. Carranza might be somewhat more refined Oom Paul. His capacity for silent deliberation is remarkable, though when he speaks it with fluency

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[51]Hale to State Department, November 12, 1913/9685.

> and appositeness. . . The Government is, so to speak, in Carranza's hat.[52]

Hale's vignette was quite accurate. At this stage of the Constitutionalist Revolution, the First Chief had surrounded himself with a group of advisors—he called them his cabinet—who were entirely subservient. He made almost all the decisions and, as a result, the movement enjoyed a greater unity than at any other time.[53]

After waiting two days for the rebel chieftain's formal reply to Wilson's arms proposal, Hale reported some disturbing news: "Urgent. I have just learned that Carranza believes Washington is not sincere in its declared intention of allowing importation of arms."[54] When, later tha same day, Carranza delivered his formal response, it reflected the rebels' suspicions. The special agent reported that the formal reply differed greatly from the verbal response Carranza had given at the conference two days before. Now the First Chief dwelt at length on

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[52]Hale to State Department, November 14, 1913 (two)/ 9733, 9737. In comparing Carranza to Oom Paul, Hale was probably referring to Paul Kruger, the intensely nationalistic late-nineteenth century leader of the South African Boers.

[53]Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, I, 219-20; Martín Luis Guzmán, The Eagle and the Serpent, trans. Harriet de Onís (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), 51-57. Although the latter citation is a historical novel, in many ways it is a memoir, because Guzman was a revolutionary who served in the camps of both Carranza and Villa.

[54]Hale to State Department, November 14, 1913/9736.

Wilson's threat of intervention. Acknowledging that he still wished to receive arms from the United States, he also warned that any foreign interference in Mexico's domestic affairs was "inadmissable upon any grounds or upon any pretext."[55] Presumably he extended this exclusion to the arranging of a peaceful transfer of power to a new provisional government in Mexico City.

Carranza must have been struck by the incongruity of Wilson's actions: while negotiating through Lind and O'Shaughnessy for the peaceful ouster of Huerta, the president was also offering the Constitutionalists weapons so that they could eliminate the dictator by force. Hale suspected that this prompted the First Chief's change of attitude. The rebel leaders, he reported, feared that Washington was "using the threat of lifting the arms embargo merely to unseat Huerta and to set up another President in Mexico City." "This," he insisted, "they would never forgive."[56] But Carranza's suspicions probably went deeper. He wished to avoid making any commitment to Wilson for fear that the American President would use it as a means of attempting to influence the course of the Constitutionalist Revolution.

After contemplating the First Chief's response, Hale

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[55]Hale to State Department, November 14, 15, 1913/ 9738, 9759.

[56]Ibid.

himself made a plea for a change of attitude in Washington. "The Constitutionalists," he again emphasized, "are totally irreconcilable towards the capitalistic and military elements, which they hold would still be in power in the capital even with Huerta out of the Presidency." The rebel leaders had told him that Madero, by allowing these elements representation in the interim regime that preceded his election to the presidency, had subverted his own chances of success. Hale noted that the Constitutionalists were determined that the same situation should not be allowed to happen again. They "know their own minds perfectly," he insisted, "their programme is definite, their pertinacity is intense and their prospects bright." Then he inquired: "Do they not thus constitute the most powerful, single factor in the whole problem and is not any attempted solution which ignores [this] fact certain to fail to give Mexico peace?"[57] What he was suggesting as subtly yet forcefully as possible was that President Wilson should forget about his efforts to negotiate a peaceful change of governments in Mexico City, because the

[57]Hale to State Department, November 15, 16, 1913/ 9759, 9769. One of the provisions of the Treaty of Ciudad Juárez, by which Porfirio Díaz capitualated to Madero's triumphant revolutionary armies, was that an ad interim government, headed by Francisco de la Barra, Díaz's Minister of Foreign Relations, should serve until elections could be held. The de la Barra government did much to disillusion many of the revolutionaries and helped produce the chaos that Madero inherited. See Cumberland, The Mexican Revolution, 150-71.

Constitutionalists would neither acknowledge it nor lay down their arms until they were completely triumphant.

Wilson was perplexed by Carranza's attitude. He seemed transfixed by the very name Constitutionalists, a name that carried with it a pledge to restore constitutional government to Mexico. It seemed incomprehensible to him that those who made this pledge should use other than constitutional means to purge those who had traditionally subverted constitutional processes. Not surprisingly he sought clarification of several matters before making any more proposals to the rebels. Hale was to make the following inquiries:

> Are the Constitutionalists willing to have Constitutional Government restored by peaceable means or do they prefer force? If assured of free and fair elections would they submit their cause to the ballot or do they still insist on the sword as the only weapon? Are there any men outside of their army in whose wisdom and patriotism they have confidence[? If] so secure as many names as possible[.] If the Constitutionalists succeed in setting up a government by force do they intend to give the people an early opportunity to elect a president and congress at a free and fair election? If so would they be willing to surrender the government into the hands of those selected by the people at such an election even though the persons selected were not the ones preferred by those in power?

In providing the special agent with new instructions, Bryan revealed the extent of Wilson's distress:

> He is deeply disturbed by the impression he gets from your last telegram that the leaders of the Constitutionalists would trust no one but themselves. He would not be willing, even

> indirectly, to assist them if they took so narrow and selfish a view. It would show that they do not understand Constitutional processes.[58]

Hale must have been disappointed that his previous explanations had gone for naught; nonetheless, he sought another conference with Carranza and attempted to present his President's point of view. As forcefully as possible he argued for the acceptance of a constitutional transfer of power, but the rebel leaders were just as stubborn as Wilson. They did not even honor Wilson's inquiries with specific answers to his questions, but once again stated their determination never to compromise on their revolutionary goals. Carranza, moreover, continued to issue public statements to the effect that the would brook no foreign interference in Mexico's internal affairs and that all he wanted from the United States was the right to purchase arms.[59]

Hale soon grew impatient with the First Chief's outbursts. The American agent felt that the public statements were meant for domestic consumption, an attempt on Carranza's part to pose as a super-nationalist and to counter Huerta's patriotic pronouncements. The rebel

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[58] State Department to Hale, November 16, 1913/9759.

[59] Hale to State Department, November 17, 1913/9812; Tucson Daily Citizen, November 15-18, 1913; El Paso Morning Times, November 15-18, 1913; New York Times, November 15, 1913; p. 1; ibid., November 16, 1913, p. 2.

chieftain further chagrined Hale on November 17 by launching a war of nerves. Claiming that he had more pressing problems to occupy his time, Carranza refused to meet again with the American agent and insisted that all communications should be submitted in writing to Francisco Escudero, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. When Escudero, and then the previsouly congenial Bonillas, refused to comment on Wilson's recent inquiries, Hale insisted upon a personal meeting with Carranza. Again the First Chief excused himself, whereupon Escudero demanded that Hale present formal credentials before the Constitutionalists would agree to any more conferences.[60]

Faced with such evasive tactics, Hale's attitude toward the rebels began to change. He came to the opinion that they were to enamored with their own power because of their recent military victories: Obregón's at Culiacán, the capital of the state of Sinaloa, on November 14, and Villa's at Ciudad Juárez, across the Rio Grande from El Paso, Texas, two days later. No doubt both victories bolstered the confidence of the Constitutionalist leaders, some of whom intimated that they did not need arms from the United States. Hale also believed, and he was probably correct, that Escudero's demand for formal credentials was a ploy to secure diplomatic recognition of the

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[60]Hale to State Department, November 17, 18 (two), 1913/9768, 9807, 9814.

Constitutionalists' belligerency. The special agent was further annoyed when the Minister of Foreign Relations told reporters that he had asked for Hale's credentials as a preliminary step to starting formal negotiations. All previous talks, he insisted, had been held out of friendship for Hale and had been "extra-official." When queried on the matter by correspondents, the American agent clearly evidenced his pique, charging that Escudero's comments were a "complete misrepresentation."[61]

Feigning indifference to American support, on November 19, Carranza announced that he would return to Hermosillo. Later that same day, he departed by rail. By this time, also, Wilson was tiring of the Constitutionalists' evasiveness and he ordered Hale to return to Tucson. Before departing from Nogales, the harried special agent, his words loaded with sarcasm, revealed to reporters his unhappiness over the rebels' attitude:

> You know, the world is full of all kinds of people. Some are not only impossible, but highly improbable. Please understand that I am not speaking of the gentlemen across the border who are with such admirable skill preventing their friends from helping them.[62]

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[61] Ibid.; Tucson Daily Citizen, November 19, 20, 1913; El Paso Morning Times, November 19, 20, 1913; New York Times, November 19, 1913, p. 2.

[62] Hale to State Department, November 19, 1913 (two)/ 9819, 9820; State Department to Hale, November 19, 1913/ 9825; New York Times, November 20, 1913, p. 2.

If by evasions and harassing tactics Carranza hoped to induce Wilson into offering arms without attached strings, he overplayed his hand. That he did, indeed, want American arms was evidenced by the fact that he left Escudero and Bonillas behind in Nogales to arrange another conference with Hale, while he paused at Magdalena, a short distance from Nogales, to await the outcome. When Consul Simpich notified Escudero and Bonillas that Hale had left Nogales, rebel agents were sent to Tucson to invite him to continue the negotiations at Hermosillo. Wilson, however, believed that further contacts with the Constitutionalists would be fruitless. On November 24, he recalled Hale to Washington.[63]

Although Hale probably understood the reasons for Carranza's obstinacy better than did Wilson, both were disappointed at their inability to promote a rapprochement with the Constitutionalists. Making matters worse, the failure of Hale's negotiations had the effect of bolstering Huerta's confidence. The old general was definitely shaken by the news of Hale's visit to Nogales and the prospect of American aid to the revolutionaries. For a time he seemed on the verge of succumbing to Wilson's pressure. On November 15, his Minister of Gobernación,

[63]Hale to State Department, [n.d.]/9902; Simpich to State Department, November 20, 1913/9843; State Department to Hale, November 24, 1913/9825; Tucson Daily Citizen, November 22, 1913.

Manuel Garza Aldape, promised to provide O'Shaughnessy with a list of names from which Huerta's successor might be chosen. But when news of Carranza's response to Wilson's propositions reached Mexico City, the usurper again became defiant. He absolutely refused to step down. Not wanting to seem less nationalistic than the rebel chieftain, he renewed his pronouncements against foreign interference in Mexican internal affairs.[64] If, as Carranza suspected, Wilson was using the conferences with the Constitutionalists as a double-edged sword, the results did more to hinder than help his efforts to unseat Huerta.

The Constitutionalists, themselves, were anything but pleased with the results of the conference at Nogales. Disappointed at not securing a lifting of the arms embargo, they also feared that Hale had returned to Washington with the wrong image of the revolutionaries and that he would prejudice the Wilson Administration against them. Throughout the month of December, therefore, the Constitutionalist agents in Washington maintained contact with Hale and sought to cultivate a more favorable impression. To their surprise, they found that the American agent held the Constitutionalist leaders in high regard and that he was sympathetic to their cause. He warned them, nonetheless, that their attitude prevented a formal

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[64] O'Shaughnessy to State Department, November 13 (two), 15 (three), 1913/9705, 9720, 9755, 9756, 9757; New York Times, November 15, 1913, p. 2.

lifting of the arms embargo. He did suggest, probably without the knowledge of President Wilson, that it would be easy for the rebels to smuggle arms across the border at carefully selected isolated spots.[65]

Although there is no evidence that Hale attempted to influence the President in favor of the Constitutionalists, the rebel agents temproarily lost their liaison with the Administration when, in January, Hale fell ill and was indisposed for months. Because of his illness, he asked to be relieved of his duties. Wilson was saddened by the loss of so loyal and sympathetic a servant and, in acceding to the resignation, noted that he and Bryan would "be at a loss where to turn for similar service in the time ahead of us."[66] His services as an executive agent at an end, Hale ratified his faith in Wilson by publishing an article in the May, 1914, issue of World's Work which, as the title, "Our Moral Empire In America," suggests, was a

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[65]Hale to Wilson, December 31, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 101; Francisco Urquidi (Constitutionalist agent, New York) a Antonio J. Villarreal, November 24, 1913, Buckley Papers, File No. 233; Robert V. Pesqueira (Constitutionalist agent, Washington) a Carranza, December 24, 30, 1913, Isidro Fabela (ed.), Documentos Historicos de la Revolución Mexicana, Vol. I: Revolución Y Régimen Constitucionalista (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960), 180-81, 184-85.

[66]Hale to Wilson, December 31, 1913, January 13, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 101; Wilson to Hale, January 14, 1914, ibid., Series III, vol. 9, pp. 327-28.

defense of the President's righteous stand against the Huerta style of politics in Latin America.[67]

The mutual admiration and common political philosophies which had marked the relationship between Wilson and Hale did not survive World War I. As the war in Europe progressed in 1914-1915, the ex-special agent, a staunch Germanophile, became convinced that America's neutrality policies favoed the Allies. Wilson's attitude, especially, disturbed him. He believed that the President's mind was "warped by the fact that he had never studied anything but British history."[68] Hale's dissatisfaction, plus the offer of a $15,000 annual salary, led him, early in 1915, to accept a position with the German Information Service, a cover agency for Germany's propaganda effort in the United States. Ironically, it was Hale's letter to the editor of the New York Times, which was published December 2, 1914, defending the Administration against the interventionist tirades of Theodore Roosevelt, that caught the attention of the propagandists. Assuming that Hale, an old friend of the President, might "hold the keys" to the back door of the White House, German propagandist George Sylvester Viereck, at the urging of German Ambassador Johann von Bernstorff, contacted the

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[67]William Bayard Hale, "Our Moral Empire in America," World's Work, XXVIII (May, 1914), 52-58.

[68]New York Times, July 27, 1918, p. 1.

ex-special agent and engaged his services. Although there is no evidence that Hale ever attempted to influence Wilson directly, for almost a year and a half, he was a member of the propagandists' "Inner Council." In May, 1916, he quit the German Information Service to accept the post of Berlin correspondent for the Hearst newspapers.[69]

In October, 1917, Hale's role in the German propaganda effort was bared when the State Department released the texts of several of Bernstorff's telegrams which, according to Secretary of State Robert Lansing, proved that German agents had engaged in "acts of war" against the United States even before she entered the war. By implication Hale was branded as a German agent. In January, 1918, the former publishers of Century Magazine revealed that in 1908 Hale had offered them an article relating the details of a recent personal interview with the Kaiser. The German Foreign Office, however, thought the article too revealing of Germany's military plans and purchased all of the already printed copies in order to suppress it. Although there was nothing particularly condemnatory about the journalist's role in the incident, even the New York Times' version of the episode referred

[69]Ibid., December 2, 1914, p. 12; ibid., December 7, 1918, p. 1; ibid., April 11, 1924, p. 21; George Sylvester Viereck, Spreading Germs of Hate (New York: H. Liverlight, 1930), 53-54, 58, 113-14; Rosewater, "William Bayard Hale," D.A.B., VIII, 113.

to Hale as the "Kaiser's friend." Later that year, his reputation was further damaged when investigations by the Attorney General of New York and the Chief of the Bureau of Investigation of the United States Department of Justice produced testimony that Hale had written a propaganda speech defending the sinking of the Lusitania and that, while he claimed to be a Hearst correspondent in 1916-1917, he was actually serving as a German agent in Europe. An Army intelligence officer, moreover, charged that the news despatches Hale sent from Europe to the New York American were definitely "pro-German, anti-British, and anti-American." The overall impression that emerged from these exposes was that Hale was a traitor to his country.[70]

Hale denied every charge, and the fact that he was never prosecuted would seem to indicate that the Justice Department had no concrete evidence of wrongdoing. Hale maintained that the sinking of the Lusitania sickened him and that afterwards his enthusiasm for the German propaganda effort waned until he became completely disenchanted and resigned to accept the post with the Hearst chain.[71]

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[70] New York Times, October 11, 1917, p. 1; ibid., October 12, 1917, p. 3; ibid., January 11, 1918, p. 5; ibid., July 16, 1918, p. 1; ibid., July 26, 1918, p. 20; ibid., July 27, 1918, p. 1; ibid., August 2, 1918, p. 10; ibid., August 9, 1918, p. 20; ibid., August 12, 1918, p. 9; ibid., December 7, 1918, p. 1; ibid., December 8, 1918, p. 4; ibid., December 14, 1918, p. 3; ibid., December 15, 1918, p. 10.

[71] Ibid., July 18, 1918, p. 10; ibid., August 1, 1918, p. 11; ibid., August 25, 1918, I, p. 2; ibid., December 8,

Despite all his professions of loyalty to the United States, Hale was still the subject of numerous persecutions. He was expelled from social clubs and literary societies. His name was expunged from biographical directories—including Who's Who In America—and he was proscribed by his profession. During his travails, neither the President nor anyone else in the Administration came to his defense. After the war he retreated to Europe, an embittered man. Venting his venom on Wilson, he produced one book, The Story of a Style (1920), in which he ridiculed his former master's rhetoric, literary ability, and idealism. In the more friendly environs of Munich, Bavaria, he died on April 10, 1924, a relatively obscure figure.[72]

For almost seven months, from June to December, 1913, Hale was Wilson's most trusted adviser on Mexican affairs. He had forcefully, if not with entire accuracy, brought to the President's attention the sordid details of Huerta's rise to power. He was the first to impress upon Wilson and Bryan the strength of the revolutionaries. The recall of Henry Lane Wilson, the sending of John Lind, and the first attempts to promote cooperation with the Constitutionalists

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1918, p. 4.

[72]New York Times, April 11, 1924, p. 21; Rosewater, "William Bayard Hale," D.A.B., VIII, 113. The last edition of Who's Who In America to contain a biography of Hale was the 1916-1917 edition, vol. IX, p. 1036.

all resulted, in part, from his counsels. He left Wilson's service with a better understanding of what motivated the revolutionaries than any other member of the Administration. But other agents would soon go beyond Hale's mere understanding and develop an emotional attachment to the rebels. It was their pleadings that would have the greatest effect on Wilson's attitude toward the Mexican Revolution.

CHAPTER VI

A BUDDING FRIENDSHIP

All of Wilson's diplomatic efforts in Mexico in the fall of 1913 had met with failure. Having been rebuffed by both Huerta and Carranza, uncertain that either would ever establish a government in Mexico City that he could recognize, and fearful that military intervention would provoke war with both, Wilson announced on November 20 that he would again revert to a policy of "watchful waiting."[1] In what was, perhaps, the clearest statement of his Mexican policy to date, the President directed a circular note to the world powers, announcing his determination "to isolate General Huerta entirely; to cut him off from foreign sympathy and aid and from domestic credit, whether moral or material, and so to force him out." He insisted, moreoever, that he was willing to "await the results without irritation or impatience."[2] Presumably he meant that he was willing to allow the civil war in Mexico to remain a

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[1] New York Times, November 21, 1913, p. 1.

[2] State Department to all Embassies except Turkey and Mexico, and to European Legations, Belgium, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Denmark and Portugal, November 24, 1913/11443b.

war of attrition until, hopefully, the revolutionaries, whom he assumed had the best interests of the masses of Mexican people at heart, were victorious.

The siege-like operation implicit in the Administration's Mexican policy was not to John Lind's liking. He believed that the Constitutionalists deserved the active support of the United States. Lind's sympathy for the rebels resulted from his personal hatred of Huerta and, more importantly, from his growing awareness of what he considered to be the true causes of the Mexican Revolution. As early as September 19, he wrote to Bryan that a purely political settlement, a mere transition in government, would solve none of Mexico's problems permanently. "There can be no lasting peace," he insisted, "without judicious and substantial social and economic reforms."[3]

Lind drew this conclusion from the information he gathered in his many interviews and voluminous correspondence. The initial spark likely came from William

[3]Lind to Bryan, September 19, 1913, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; John P. Harrison, "Un Análisis Norteamericano de la Revolución Mexicana," Historia Mexicana, V (April-June, 1956), 598-618. The latter citation is a Spanish translation of the first, with an introduction and notes. Harrison contends that, despite being an amateur diplomatist, Lind understood Mexico's needs better than did the professionals in the State Department. President Wilson was greatly impressed by the letter. In returning it to Bryan he noted: "It is a splendid letter and most instructive from every point of view. It will furnish us much food for thought and conference." See Wilson to Bryan, October 6, 1913, Bryan Papers, Box 43.

Bayard Hale, who had described the Revolution as a struggle "between surviving medievalism, with its ideas of aristocracy, exploit [and] peonage, and modern civilization."[4] It was in such terms that Lind attempted to describe the conflict. But it was his own personal observations of the hacienda system and peasant life that made the greatest impact on Lind's thinking. Early in September he and Admiral Fletcher visited a hacienda near Vera Cruz which was managed by a fellow Minnesotan, R. M. Emery. Lind was appalled by the squalor in which the peóns lived. He was outraged by the spectacle of peasants being worked mercilously under the supervision of armed overseers. What astounded him most was that Mr. Emery, a well-educated man who was a former member of the University of Minnesota's board of regents, defended the system. "When Americans and 'Democrats' at that, in the course of a few years become so entranced with this method of appropriating the toil and blood of human beings that they wantonly repudiate the noblest accomplishments of our people," he indignantly wrote to Bryan, it was no wonder that revolution was ravaging Mexico. He intimated, moreover, that virtually ever native and foreign-owned hacienda was guilty of exploiting the Mexican people.[5]

[4] Hale to State Department, June 3, 1913/23616.

[5] Ibid.; La Opinión (Vera Cruz), September 5, 1913; New York World, September 2, 1913.

In reporting his analyses of the problems that beset Mexican society, Lind was often naive, his information faulty. For example, he blamed Spanish colonial policy entirely for Mexico's contemporary agrarian problems, including the inequitable distribution of land. He seemed completely ignorant of the fact that many of the great aggregations of agricultural property had been secured within the past fifty years, during the Juárez and Díaz regimes of the late nineteenth century.[6] A man of definite anti-Catholic bias, Lind ignored any positive role the Church played in Mexican society, and insisted that the clergy, from the bishops to the curates, were little more than agents of repression. If a Mexican was to succeed in business or politics, Lind intimated to Washington, he must cooperate with the Church. "Saint Peter holds the keys [to success]," he wrote to Bryan; "the Padre has some 'pull' with him; appease the Padre, make him well disposed, and the chances of enjoying the goodwill of

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[6]Lind to Bryan, September 19, 1913, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; John Lind, "The Mexican People," The Bellman, XVII (December 5, 12, 1914), 715-18, 749-54. This article, published after Lind's return to the United States, represents his comprehensive view of Mexico's problems. The article was originally delivered as an address to the Chicago Traffic Club in the fall of 1914.

For scholarly accounts of land acquisition and exploitation in the late 19th century and early 20th century, see George M. McBride, The Land Systems of Mexico (New York: American Geographical Society, 1923), 71-81; González Ramírez, El Problema agrario, 116-240.

Saint Peter are fair."[7] He suggested, also, that the Revolution resulted largely because the Church had lost its control over the common people. That Lind believed they were losing their reverence for the Church was demonstrated in a remarkable despatch in which the agent suggested that the United States should secure an option on the National Cathedral as a likely site for building a new embassy.[8]

Lind mistakenly ignored all local influences and divided the Mexican people into two geographical groupings: Northerners and Southerners. Although he had never been in the northern part of the republic, he developed the notion that, with the possible exception of the wealthy propertied and professional classes of the South, the Northern Mexicans were decidedly superior to their Southern counterparts in intellectual and economic potential. He suggested that the backwardness of the Southern Indians was

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[7]Lind to State Department, August 28, 1913/10487; Lind, "The Mexican People," The Bellman, XVII, 715-18, 749-54. This article was immediately branded as being anti-Catholic by Father Francis G. Kelley, an outspoken critic of the Wilson Administration's Mexican policy. Claiming that Lind encouraged the revolutionaries, hence the persecution of the Catholic Church, Father Kelley used the article as anti-Wilson propaganda. Father Kelley also charged that Lind plagiarized most of his historical data from the Encyclopedia Britannica, which may explain Lind's superficial knowledge of Mexican history. See Testimony of Buckley, Lind, and Father Kelley, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 774-79, 2336, 2682; Stephenson, Lind, 279-80.

[8]Lind to State Department, December 18, 1913/10256; Lind to Wilson, January 10, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 101.

comparable to that of the Negroes in the Southern United States, except he believed that the Indians' potential was greater than the black mans'. In fact, he had greater faith in the Indians than in the mestizos (mixed Indian and European). The single most stultifying influence in Southern Mexico, he insisted, was "the mongrel progency of the early Moorish Spaniards."[9] "It is absolutely futile to hope for orderly government at the hands of the Mexicans of the South," he wrote to Bryan, shortly after Huerta assumed dictatorial powers. Having concluded that a revolutionary settlement was necessary, Lind placed his faith in the rebels of the North and dismissed those of the South, the followers of Emiliano Zapata, as little more than brigands.[10]

But Lind believed that more than the racial composition of the populations of the two sections was responsible for the North's advancement. He contended that Northern Mexico's proximity to the United States was the single most important determinant. Northern Mexicans were afforded a greater opportunity to come into contact with Anglo-American ideas and institutions. The most fortunate

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[9]Lind to Bryan, September 19, 1913, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence.

[10]Lind to State Department, October 11, 1913/14966; Testimony of Lind, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 2327-30; Lind, "The Mexican People," The Bellman, XVII, 718-19, 749, 752.

among them, Lind noted, had even lived in the United States. They had labored for American businessmen, and they or their children had been educated in American schools. The total result was that the Northerners had appropriated "progressive ideas" from the United States.[11] Lind naturally assumed, therefore, that the Constitutionalists of the North drew their revolutionary fervor from their association with American ideas and institutions. Their revolution, he wrote to President Wilson, was an attempt "to keep step with the march of our people."[12]

By the end of September, Lind felt that the United States had a definite responsibility to give moral support to the Constitutionalists; after his mid-November failure to pressure Huerta into resigning, he advocated outright assistance to the revolutionaries.[13] A revolutionary settlement "will be a little rough," he noted:

> [W]e must see to it that the walls are left intact, but I should not worry if some of the verandas and French windows are demolished . . . As a good friend and as a true and unselfish one, only desirous of Mexico's good, we should

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[11] Lind to Bryan, September 19, 1913, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; Lind to Bryan, December 5, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 42; Testimony of Lind, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 2327-30.

[12] Lind to Wilson, January 10, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 101.

[13] Lind to Bryan, September 19, 1913, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; Lind to State Department, November 13, 15, 1913/9704, 9760.

> be near enough to prevent a neighborhood scandal, and as a good neighbor we shall be glad also when the house is ready for permanent repairs to lent [sic] a helping hand and see to it that the work is done fairly and that the required material is not wasted.[14]

In these comments, Lind revealed his true feelings concerning the Mexican Revolution. Despite his sincere sympathies for the Constitutionalists, he had an early twentieth-century American progressive politican's middle-class fear of social upheaval. In this note and those that followed, in which he discussed the advisability of a rebel victory, Lind insisted that the Wilson Administration be prepared to mitigate the extreme inclinations of the revolutionaries. The President read Lind's opinions with great interest. His own actions and statements ultimately revealed that he agreed with his agent's point of view. But for the time being Carranza's refusal to cooperate offered him no avenue by which to influence the Revolution.

Lind even offered a solution to his problem. He suggested that aid be extended, instead, to General Pancho Villa. By late November, Lind had come to the opinion that Villa was a "true, virulent type of the most promising element of the Mexican population." He admitted that the general had faults, that he was "avaricious" and "cruel," but insisted, nonetheless, that he had attained the highest

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[14]Lind to State Department, November 15, 1913/9760.

degree of "physical, moral and mental efficiency . . . [the Mexican] environment could reasonably expect to produce." But again Lind counseled that if aid was extended to Villa, the Administration should attempt to restrain his extreme violent tendencies.[15]

Restraining the Constitutionalists, especially when their campaigns threatened the lives and property of foreigners, was a matter of grave concern to Wilson in December, 1913. Having pressured the European powers into following his lead in formulating Mexican policy, Wilson, in turn, was being pressured by those nations to accept the responsibility for protecting the interests of all foreigners in Mexico. Accordingly, as his part of the bargain, the President, in his annual address to Congress of December 2, promised that all efforts would be made to provide such protection.[16] Even as Wilson made this commitment, his resolve to stand by it was being tested by none other than Pancho Villa.

While Carranza was establishing his provisional government in the northwestern state of Sonora, General Villa was carving out a bailiwick of his own in north-central Mexico. After his smashing victory at Torreón, Coahuila, on October 8, he moved northward, captured Ciudad

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[15]Lind to State Department, December 5, 1913/10077.

[16]Cline, United States and Mexico, 152-53; New York Times, December 3, 1913, p. 1-2.

Juárez on November 16, then established dominion over the entire state of Chihuahua with the exception of the capital, Chihuahua. On December 3, this federal garrison fell, making Villa the strongest military force among the Constitutionalists.[17] Along with the news of Villa's military triumphs, State Department officials in Washington also received an increasing number of reports of Villista depredations upon foreign property.[18] These reports had begun to trickle in following the rebel victory at Torreón, but at that time it was hard for Wilson to be too concerned about the maltreatment of foreigners in northern Mexico, when at the same time Huerta was rigging elections, arresting legislators, and establishing himself as dictator. But when Villa captured Chihuahua, the crisis in Mexico City had passed and Wilson had made his commitment to protect foreign interests. He could no longer ignore the depredations, especially after Villa ordered every Spaniard to leave Mexico within ten days or face a firing

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[17] Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 17; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitutionalista, I, 263-87.

[18] All American Consuls in Mexico had standing instructions from the State Department to make representations in behalf of the lives and interests of all foreigners in their territory of jurisdiction. The instructions and representative complaints from American, French, Spanish, German, Japanese, and Chinese nationals concerning depredations by the revolutionaries may be found in Foreign Relations, 1913, 898-956.

squad.[19]

Out of this new problem that confronted Wilson came one ray of hope. Villa obviously favored Americans over other foreigners and, because Wilson had not recognized Huerta, gave them preferential treatment. He clearly demonstrated this attitude at Torreón. Immediately after the capture of that city, the Villistas began an indiscriminate looting of the business establishments. The American Consular Agent, George C. Carothers, quickly sent a note of protest to General Villa's headquarters, demanding the protection of American lives and property. Within an hour, an officer and a squad of twenty-five soldiers were placed at Carothers' disposal. Taking orders from him, the soldiers were posted before American-owned businesses. At the same time, Villa ordered the cessation of all looting and punished some of the perpetrators. Thereafter, Carothers reported, the Villistas were orderly.[20]

What was also encouraging about the Torreón episode was that Consul Carothers was able to persuade Villa to

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[19]Marion Letcher (American Consul, Chihuahua) to State Department, December 11, 1913, and State Department to Letcher, December 12, 1913, Foreign Relations, 1913, 903-904.

[20]Theodore C. Hamm (American Consul, Durango, forwarding Carothers' report of conditions in Torreón, September 25-October 11, 1913) to State Department, October 15, 1913/9658; copy in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 97; Testimony of George C. Carothers, February 28, 1920, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1766.

mitigate his harsh attitude toward other foreigners. Calling upon the general to personally thank him for protecting American interests, Carothers also protested the persecution of the Spaniards in Torreón.[21] Most of the Spaniards in question were not remnants of the colonial regime, but had immigrated to Mexico during the presidency of Porfirio Diaz and had become some of his staunchest supporters. Many of them were pawnbrokers and loansharks. They also dominated the retail grocery business. Their credit policies had always been unpopular with the lower classes, and now Villa charged that they were all Huertistas and had aided the Federals in the defense of Torreon. Carothers argued that the general's charges were unfounded, and, whether a result of the consul's persuasion or some other influence, Villa temporarily halted his persecution of the Spaniards.[22]

Before Villa left Torreón to begin his campaigns in Chihuahua, he called upon Carothers, wished him well, and promised to cooperate with other American officials in the

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid. The economic activities of the Spaniards were aptly described by Edith O'Shaughnessy: "The Spaniards are the traders of Mexico. They keep countless pawn-shops (empegnos); they are usurers and money-lenders of all kinds; they are the overseers on the haciendas and, incidentally, they keep all the grocery-shops; in fact, they control the sale of nearly everything in Mexico." See A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 94.

future. But when Villa captured Chihuahua and renewed his persecution of the Spaniards, the American Consul there, Marion Letcher, was unable to change the general's attitude.[23] By this time the State Department had decided that a special agent was needed in Constitutionalist-controlled territory to reinforce the efforts of the consuls. Not surprisingly, the man chosen for the delicate mission was George C. Carothers, the Consular Agent at Torreón.

Carothers was a long-time resident of Mexico. In 1889, aged fourteen, he emigrated with his parents from San Antonio, Texas, to Saltillo, Coahuila. In 1902 he was made the Consular Agent at Torreón. Since consular agents did not receive a regular salary, but merely a percentage of the fees collected for official services, Carothers occupied himself mainly as a commission merchant, grocer, and real estate speculator. Never a large operator, he estimated in 1914 that his holdings were worth no more than 25,000 pesos.[24] Because of his penchant for gambling,

[23]Hamm to State Department, October 15, 1913/9658; Letcher to State Department, December 18, 1913, Foreign Relations, 1913, 909.

[24]Register of the Department of State, 1917 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), 81; Raymond G. Carroll, "United States Special Agents Powerful in Mexico," New York Sun, August 15, 1915; copy in Buckley Papers, File no. 233; National Archives, Record Group 59, File no. 111.70C22/59; Carothers to State Department, October 8, 1914, ibid., 125.36582/111. All Department of State records cited herein, unless designated otherwise, are from Record Group 59; hereinafter such materials will be cited

he was perpetually in debt. Indeed, in February, 1912, State Department officials, after a special investigation, had ordered Carothers' dismissal from the consular service because of his inability to meet his financial obligations. Before the dismissal order was put into effect, Torreón was swept up in the Orozco rebellion against the Madero government. During those troubled days, Carothers worked tirelessy to protect American lives and property and won the admiration of his superiors and the citizens of Torreón, including his creditors. The Director of the Consular Service, Wilbur J. Carr, decided, therefore, that Carothers deserved a second chance.[25]

In his late thirties, George Carothers was a portly figure of a man; his belly hung over his belt, forming what his Mexican friends called the "curve of felicity." He wore small-apertured metal-rimmed eyeglasses that accentuated the full moon shape of his face. Despite his bulk, he was fastidious in his dress and presented a

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NA, plus file and document number. For the nature of the office of consular agent, see Graham H. Stuart, American Diplomatic and Consular Practice (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1952), 343-44.

[25]George H. Murphy (Consul General At Large) to State Department, January 20, 1912, NA 125.36582/40; State Department to Hamm, February 5, 1912, ibid./40a; Hamm to State Department, March 30, 1912, ibid./42; State Department to Hamm, April 10, 1912, ibid.

pleasing appearance.[26] His despatches reveal that he was not excitable and that he was almost always in good spirits. From his childhood days in San Antonio, he seemed to prefer the companionship of Mexicans to that of Anglo-Americans. In Torreón his business interests brought him into contact with all strata of Mexican society. He knew their problems and understood their moods.[27] As a journalist who watched Carothers in action put it, "he knew latino psychology as a cow knows its calf."[28] In the vernacular of the border, he was simpatico.

In the beginning, the nature of Carothers' service was different from that of previous agents. He was directly responsible to the Secretary of State rather than the President. His communications went through formal Department channels. At first his observations and opinions were not solicited. He was instructed to perform specific tasks and report the results. Only after months of service was he encouraged to operate on his own initiative.

At the time of his appointment to the post of special agent, Carothers was on a leave-of-absence, attending to some personal affairs in the United States. On November

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[26] Edward Larocue Tinker, Corridas and Calaveras (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961), 6. For a photograph of Carothers, see El Pueblo (Mexico City), March 8, 1915.

[27] Carroll, "United States Special Agents," New York Sun, August 15, 1915.

[28] Tinker, Corridas and Calaveras, 6.

17, he stopped in Washington long enough to have an interview with Boaz Long, Chief of the State Department's Division of Latin American Affairs. He again described his relations with Villa, picturing the general as not only capable, well-meaning, and just, but as willing to cooperate with American officials.[29] Coincidentally, Carothers gave a verbal account of his cordial relations with Villa at the same time that the Department was receiving William Bayard Hale's reports of his own troubled relations with Carranza at the Nogales Conferences. The friendly attitude of the Chihuahua strong man constrasted dramatically with the bellicose pronouncements of the First Chief and offered tantalizing possibilities for influencing the course of the Mexican Revolution that Wilson could not ignore. Carothers' impressions, moreover, were strongly reinforced by those of Lind. The decision to send a State Department agent to northern Mexico, therefore, was prompted as much by a desire to establish cordial relations with at least one Constitutionalist leader as by a desire to protect foreign lives and property.

The probability of a new assignment must have been mentioned to Carothers while he was in Washington, because he sent Bryan an itinerary of his movements for the month

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[29]Hamm to State Department, October 27, 1913, NA 125.36582/50; Long, Memorandum of conversation with G. C. Carothers, November 26, 1913/9836-1/2.

of December. The Department's initial instructions, which were directed to Carothers on December 9, while he was aboard ship en route from New York to Galveston, Texas, were very general. He was "to make a trip into the State of Chihuahua with a view of conferring with General Villa and other leaders, for the purpose of insuring, in so far as may be possible, lives and property of Americans and other foreigners."[30] Carothers never acknowledged receipt of the Department's note, but when he arrived by train at Texas City, Texas, more urgent instructions awaited him. He was informed that Villa had ordered some 400 Spaniards at Chihuahua to abandon their property and leave Mexico within ten days or be shot. He was further informed that Consul Marion Letcher was unable to persuade the rebel general to reverse his decree. Carothers was directed to "proceed immediately to Chihuahua" and, if he saw Villa on the way, he was to "renew and reinforce Letcher's representations." If he reached Chihuahua without seeing Villa, he was to confer with Letcher and attempt to halt the persecution of the Spaniards. These instructions, as did the ones that followed, also hinted that Carothers' mission would entail more than merely looking to the protection of foreigners' lives and property. He was

[30]Carothers to State Department, December 2, 1913, NA 125.36582/134; Carothers to State Department, December 5, 1913, ibid., 312.52/79; State Department to Carothers, December 9, 1913, Foreign Relations, 1913, 902.

directed to "represent to him [Villa] . . . in the most impressive manner . . . the horror that would be felt throughout the civilized world by the infliction of such a penalty."[31] If Wilson was ever to openly support the revolutionaries, he wanted them to be more respectable than Huerta.

On his way to El Paso, the port of entry into the state of Chihuahua, Carothers paused long enough in San Antonio, Texas, to meet with Dr. J. M. Rodríguez, the director of the local Constitutionalist junta. A former mayor of Torreón and long-time friend of Carothers, Rodríguez described the Constitutionalist hierarchy for the new special agent and informed him of the revolutionary activity that had occurred while he was on leave in the United States. When Carothers arrived in El Paso on December 17, he found two of Villa's agents, Lázaro de la Garza and Felízitos Villarreal, awaiting him. They placed a special train at his disposal but urged him to await the arrival of two Carrancista agents, Luis Cabrera and Eliseo Arredondo, who were also on their way to see Villa. Carothers knew both of them well and decided to delay his departure for Chihuahua until their arrival in El Paso, hoping he could enlist their support

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[31] State Department to Carothers, December 13, 1913, Foreign Relations, 1913, 906.

in behalf of the Spaniards.[32]

Arriving in Chihuahua on December 22, Carothers went to the American Consulate as directed, but there he met with a hostile reception. Letcher evidently viewed the special agent's presence as evidence that the Secretary of State was displeased with the Consulate's efforts. His pride obviously wounded, Letcher told Carothers that he could accomplish nothing in Chihuahua and haughtily stalked from the room. Bewildered, the special agent set out on his own to find Villa. The enmity that developed in this first encounter between Letcher and Carothers was going to plague their relationship throughout Carothers' tenure as special agent.[33]

The special agent found Villa indisposed on the evening of the 22nd, but the next morning they breakfasted together. During the course of their meal, Carothers confronted Villa about the mistreatment of the Spaniards. In response, the rebel general poured out his bitter

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[32]Carothers to State Department, December 31, 1913, NA 312.52/104; El Paso Morning Times, December 16, 1913; San Antonio Express, December 19, 1913.

[33]Carothers to State Department, December 31, 1913, NA 312.52/104. By February 1914, the antagonism between Carothers and Letcher intensified to such a degree that Carothers asked Secretary Bryan to intercede and order Letcher to cooperate. Shortly thereafter, Bryan ordered Letcher to afford the special agent "all assistance in your power." See Carothers to State Department, February 10, 1914, and State Department to Letcher, February 18, 1914/10903.

hatred for the Spaniards, reviewing all of his earlier charges against them. He also claimed that during the battle for Chihuahua, he found arms and ammunition in the hands of Spaniards and had positive knowledge that they had aided the Federals in the defense of the city. Carothers then insisted that no one should be executed without a fair trial, and Villa agreed that none would be molested unless a court proved them guilty of aiding the Huertistas. He also promised that all who could establish their innocence could return to their property.[34]

Having acceded to Carothers' requests, Villa in turn urged that President Wilson lift the arms embargo. He insisted that with access to arms from the United States, he would be in Mexico City within sixty days. Having no authority to discuss this matter, Carothers could offer no encouragement. After the interview, the special agent left Chihuahua, fully confident that in the future Villa would be cooperative. Congratulating himself on the success of his efforts, Carothers paused in El Paso long enough to file a brief telegraphic report to Washington before hastening to Fort Worth, Texas, to join his family for Christmas.[35] In his initial effort, Carothers

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[34]Carothers to State Department, December 26, 1913, NA 312.52/94, 104; El Paso Morning Times, December 24, 1913.

[35]Ibid.; Carothers to State Department, December 24, 1913, NA 312.52/88.

seemingly had met with more success than any of the previous agents.

Meanwhile, John Lind was experiencing nothing but frustration as he grew increasingly impatient with the Constitutionalists' slow advance toward Mexico City. Having accompanied Admiral Fletcher on a voyage to Tuxpam and Tampico in late November and early December, Lind returned to Vera Cruz convinced that the rebels could easily capture those cities with the encouragement of the United States. They were inhibited from doing so, the special agent insisted, because they feared intervention by American Marines if any American oil properties were damaged. In a patently absurd reply, Bryan offered no encouragement for the rebels, but advised Lind to suggest to Admiral Fletcher and British naval authorities that they urge the Federals to surrender the cities without a fight and, thus, prevent the destruction of the oil production facilities.[36]

Throughout the month of December, Lind repeatedly reported that economic conditions in Mexico City were deteriorating, that Huerta and his henchmen were hanging on only to plunder the treasury and enrich themselves. If the rebels were not speeded to victory, he warned,

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[36]Lind to State Department, November 24, 27, 29, December 3 (two), 1913/9900, 9931, 9975, 10045, 10046; State Department to Lind, November 24, 30, 1913/9954a, 9975.

conditions in Mexico might become so bad that the outcry of European and American interests for protection would become so intense that the United States might be forced to intervene militarily.[37] When by mid-month the Administration offered the rebels no encouragement, Lind asked for a personal conference with the President.[38] Pressured by Bryan and the Chief Counselor of the State Department, John Bassett Moore, Wilson agreed to meet Lind while on Christmas vacation at Pass Christian, Mississippi.[39]

On December 30, Admiral Fletcher placed the cruiser U.S.S. Chester at Lind's disposal, and he sailed for the Mississippi coast. Since his instructions did not specify that his departure be secret, the special agent, unable to contain his jubilation, told reporters that he welcomed the opportunity to speak directly with the President and hoped that the meeting would herald a change in the Administration's policy. Wilson was visibly annoyed when reporters descended upon his holiday retreat and gave the

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[37]Lind to State Department, December 5, 8, 14, 15, 19, 22, 1913/10077, 10098, 10185, 10196, 10269, 10291.

[38]State Department to Lind, December 13, 1913/10152; Lind to State Department, December 19, 1913/10269.

[39]Bryan to Wilson, December 25, 1913, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 100; Moore to Wilson, December 29, 1913, ibid., Series IV, Box 285; Wilson to Moore, December 29, 1913/10454.

conference the fullest publicity. Lind's views being well known, rumors spread that Constitutionalist officials were aboard the Chester and that more active support of the revolutionaries would follow the meeting. Another widely circulated rumor had it that Lind was accompanied by officers of Huerta's government, who were prepared to lead an American backed coup to oust the dictator.[40]

Wilson, now fearful of his agent's discretion in meeting the press, did not even allow him ashore. Instead, the President steamed several miles into the Gulf of Mexico aboard a revenue cutter to meet Lind aboard the Chester. Although reporters chartered a tug and shadowed the President, they were not allowed aboard ship to witness the conference. The secrecy of the meeting, and Wilson's refusal afterwards even to discuss it with the press, only served to multiply and amplify the rumors.[41] Aboard ship Lind applied every argument in his repertoire in trying to persuade Wilson of the necessity of giving

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[40]Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, to Admiral Fletcher, December 29, 1913, Josephus Daniels Papers, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress, Box 39; Canada to State Department, December 30, 1913/10377; New York Times, December 30, 1913, January 1, 2, 1914, p. 1; Mexican Herald, December 31, 1913, January 1, 1914; Daily Picayune (New Orleans), January 1, 2, 1914.

[41]New York Times, January 2, 1914, p. 1; ibid., January 4, 1914, p. 2; Daily Picayune, January 3-5, 1914.

open and active support to the Constitutionalists.[42] But as Wilson indicated in reporting the character of the meeting to Secretary Bryan, Lind offered "nothing new" to persuade the President to change his policy. Lind, nonetheless, returned to Vera Cruz confident that he had been persuasive and certain that a lifting of the arms embargo and more active support of the rebels would soon follow.[43]

A month passed without Wilson taking action on his agent's suggestions. For one thing, Bryan opposed lifting the arms embargo. To him it seemed inconsistent to make representations to the rebels for the protection of foreign lives and property, then to intensify the violence in Mexico by giving them easier access to weapons.[44] His apprehension was eased somewhat by Luis Cabrera, Carranza's new agent in Washington. Late in January, Cabrera held

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[42]A transcript of Wilson's shorthand notes taken at the Pass Christian Conference gives only hints of the topics of discussion but suggest that Lind urged vigorous action. See Notes from conversation with Lind (transcript made under direction of Ray Stannard Baker), [n.d.], Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 101.

[43]Wilson to Bryan, January 6, 1913, Bryan Papers, Box 29; Lind to Wilson, January 10, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 101; Lind to Mrs. Lind, January 22, 1914, Lind Papers, Box 15; Lind to Bryan, January 15, 1914/1065-1/2. Lind left no record of his comments to the President at the Pass Christian conference, but from his correspondence to Wilson, Bryan, and Mrs. Lind, it is apparent that he believed Wilson was in complete agreement with his views.

[44]Bryan to Wilson, [n.d.], Bryan Papers, Box 41.

several secret conferences with Third Assistant Secretary of State William Phillips. He offered assurances that the Constitutionalists would respect foreign-owned property. In a move that seemed to signal a greater willingness by Carranza to cooperate with the Wilson Administration, Cabrera also assured Phillips that the revolutionaries intended to accomplish their program of social and economic reform by constitutional methods.[45]

Wilson still had reservations about openly supporting the rebels. Phillips noted that even after receiving Cabrera's assurances, Wilson was determined to "do what he believed right and not to be overinfluenced by the Mexicans."[46] A policy change which favored the Constitutionalists did follow soon after the Phillips-Cabrera meetings. If the Mexican agent's reassuring words sparked this policy change, then, even more certainly, Lind's advices had earlier paved the way. In a letter to Ambassador Page on January 29, Wilson revealed a greater understanding of the Constitutionalists than ever before. Excluding the Zapatistas, as Lind would have, Wilson concluded that the "men in the North" are "not mere rebels . . . They are conducting a revolution with a programme which goes to the very root of the causes which have made

[45]Link, New Freedom, 388-89; William Phillips, Ventures In Diplomacy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1952), 60-62.

[46]Phillips, Ventures in Diplomacy, 61.

constitutional government in Mexico impossible."[47]

By this time another factor may have influenced the President as much or more than the advice of his agent. For months, Justice Department officials had been aware that the Constitutionalists were smuggling arms across the border. Although occasionally the smugglers were apprehended and prosecuted, the Wilson Administration had not launched an all out effort to enforce the arms embargo, mainly because it was assumed that the rebels were the only ones receiving the illicit arms. In the early weeks of 1914, however, the Justice Department gained positive evidence that Huerta's agents had been purchasing large quantities of weapons and ammunition from American firms. Most of these arms reached his hands by way of Havana, although some were smuggled out of New Orleans aboard private yachts.[48] Since Huerta, apparently receiving more illicit arms than the Constitutionalists, was benefitting from the embargo, Wilson finally decided that Lind's advice was sound. On January 31, he sent a circular note to his diplomatic corps directing them to inform the powers that he no longer felt "justified in maintaining an irregular position as regards the contending parties in the matter of neutrality" and that he

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[47]Link, New Freedom, 389.

[48]Michael C. Meyer, "The Arms of the Ypiranga," Hispanic American Historical Review, L (August, 1970), 544-50.

intended to "remove the inhibition on the exportation of arms and ammunition from the United States into Mexico." Three days later he took the fateful step.[49]

Lind, meanwhile, had chafed at Wilson's delay in lifting the embargo. When the President finally made the move, the special agent interpreted it as an unqualified endorsement of the policies he had been advocating. Not satisfied with this triumph, he now demanded even more active support for the Constitutionalists. "The cause of the revolutionists is now our cause," he proclaimed in a note to Bryan, "we must see to it that they make the best of their opportunity and we must help them do so."[50] Even before the lifting of the embargo, he urged that the United States somehow take over the commissary operations of the revolutionary armies. He insisted that the rebels "should not be permitted to fritter away their time foraging in a country that must be well nigh exhausted."[51] Later he suggested that the United States provide advisors to organize the Constitutionalists' transportation,

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[49]State Department to all diplomatic missions of the United States, January 31, 1914, and Proclamation revoking the proclamation of March 14, 1912, prohibiting the exportation of arms or munitions of war to Mexico, February 3, 1914, Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1914 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), 446-48.

[50]Lind to State Department, January 30, 1914/10737.

[51]Lind to State Department, January 12, 1914/10517.

communications, and intelligence systems. "We must see to it that they get brains as well as bullets," he counseled. Urging rapid victory at any cost he offered a plan by which the revolutionaries might capture Mexico City without losing a man. He suggested means by which the city could be denied its fuel, food, and power supplies. The population of the capital would be so alarmed, he insisted, that, for their own self-interest, the people would rise up and drive Huerta from office.[52]

Perhaps his most ambitious scheme for aiding the rebels called for the capture of Huerta's gunboats, which guarded the Gulf Coast. Trained by the U.S. Navy and commanded by a U.S. Marine officer—who would temporarily assume civilian status—a small band of Mexican guerrillas, Lind insisted, could easily capture the gunboats and use them to invade Tampico and Vera Cruz. With the gunboats in rebel hands, the agent believed that the revolution would be over in thirty days. When the gunboat Zaragoza sailed for New Orleans for repairs early in February, Lind urgently wired Washington that a naval officer friend at Vera Cruz had suggested that one Armin Hartrath, Annapolis class of eighty-eight and currently a resident of New York City, might be willing to lead a group of Mexican guerrillas in an attempt to capture the gunboat as it left the mouth of the Mississippi River on its return to

[52]Lind to State Department, January 30, 1914/10737.

Tampico. Although the President vetoed this wild scheme, he congratulated Lind on the detailed information he had compiled.[53]

The pace of the revolutionaries' offensive was never fast enough for Lind, and the three-month period of January through March, 1914, was a time of great anguish for him. After victories—Villa's at Chihuahua and Ojinaga, Obregón's at Culiacán, and General Pablo González's at Ciudad Victoria—in December and January, the rebel advance halted.[54] Huerta's regime, having been at a low point both militarily and financially in November and December, showed signs of rejuvenation in January and February. Even in December Huerta enjoyed a glimmer of success; while his armies were losing in some sectors, other federal forces recaptured the all-important rail center of Torreón. Shortly thereafter the Church, hacendados, and bankers closed ranks behind the usurper as their best hope for survival.[55] Lind viewed this

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[53]Lind to Wilson, January 10, 1914, Series II, Box 101; Lind to State Department, February 5, 6 (two), 1914/10792, 10818, 10819; State Department to Lind, February 8, 1914/10818.

[54]Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 17-19; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, I, 113, 271, 289-93; González Ramírez, La Ideas - La Violencia, 406-409.

[55]Rauch, "Huerta," 189-200; Vera Estañol, La Revolución Mexicana, 350-57; Edwin Walter Kemmerer, Inflation and Revolution: Mexico's Experience of 1912-1917 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940), 11-26.

reactionary tendency with increasing alarm; but instead of seeing the turn of events as evidence of Huerta's growing strength, he insisted that the old general's stepped-up programs of military conscription, forced loans, and taxation were signs of impending anarchy. In the face of such conditions, on February 24, he suggested a new course of action, one that obviously had been on his mind for weeks:

> I believe, and I say this after serious reflection, that if the revolutionists fail to take active and efficient action by the middle of March it will be incumbent on the United States to put an end to Huerta's saturnalia of crime and oppression.[56]

Thereafter he never relented in his demands for military intervention.

Even though Bryan insisted that intervention was out of the question, Lind proceeded, on his own initiative, to plan a campaign for the capture of Mexico City. First, he sent a Marine officer to the capital to make a reconnaissance of Huerta's military installations. Then, he arranged with the American manager of the Mexican National Railway to transport secretly several hundred Marines to Mexico City by night. At dawn the Marines would seize strategic locations, arrest Huerta, and establish a military government, which would serve until the

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[56]Lind to State Department, January 7, 14, 24, 26, February 18, 24, 1914/10462, 10539, 10677, 10688, 10924, 10956.

Constitutionalists could take over the city. Huerta was to be given political asylum in the United States. Lind acknowledged that Carranza should be informed of the operation in advance but did not think the Constitutionalist leader would have any reason to raise objections. "The taking of Mexico City," he euphemistically assured the Secretary of State, "if limited to the purpose of putting a stop to Huerta's anarchical career and to afford the Mexican people an opportunity of resume orderly government should not be regarded as intervention in the offensive sense it seems to me."[57] Significantly, Bryan replied that "the President has received your recent reports and has them under consideration."[58] Was this a hint that Wilson's patience was also wearing thin and that he considered intervention a likely prospect?

Sharing Lind's frustrations over Huerta's tenacity and the Constitutionalists' inability to rapidly unseat

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[57] State Department to Lind, March 3, 1914/11000; Lind to State Department, February 24, March 8, 12, 23, 1914/10965, 11098, 11227, 27482; Captain W. A. Burnside (U.S.M.C.) to Lind (conveying summary of military strength and action, February 26-March 4, 1914), [n.d.]/16251; Stephenson, Lind, 259-60. Stephenson, using only the Lind Papers, and not having access to complete State Department files, suggested that the "most cheritable" conclusion to be drawn from this scheme is that it was pressed upon Lind by Marine and Navy officers who were "itching for a scrap with the greasers." State Department records indicate that Lind was the instigator of the plan.

[58] State Department to Lind, March 25, 1914/11265.

the usurper, Wilson also had to cope with the problems resulting from the predatory actions of the revolutionaries. Even after Carothers' apparently successful trip into Chihuahua in December, the State Department continued to receive news of depredations against the Spaniards. In addition to these complaints, came reports that Villa was confiscating coal from American-owned mining companies and making threatening gestures toward German and Japanese firms. Special Agent Carothers had no sooner arrived in Fort Worth, Texas, for a Christmas holiday when despatches from Washington directed him to find Villa and investigate the reports.[59]

When Carothers arrived in El Paso on December 30, he discovered that Villa was due to arrive across the border in Juárez the next day. The agent, meanwhile, made an investigation of the complaints and reported his belief that they were exaggerated. When Carothers did confront Villa, the general became annoyed that the American agent should repeatedly involved himself in affairs that did not directly concern the United States. When Carothers refused to back down, explaining that he had been ordered by President Wilson to intercede for the Spaniards, Villa's attitude softened. The next day he provided the agent with a written explanation of his actions, which

[59]State Department to Carothers, December 27, 1913, Foreign Relations, 1913, 909-10.

Carothers forwarded to Washington. In emotion-packed phrases (since Villa could barely write, he must have dictated the note to a stenographer or had one of his advisors prepare it), the rebel general again poured out his bitter hatred for the Spaniards. He insisted that he had intended to keep his earlier promises but found it necessary to continue the deportations as a means of protecting the Spaniards from the wrath of his soldiers. Any of them who could vindicate themselves, he promised, could return to their homes and property without fear of reprisals. Again, Carothers was satisfied that Villa was acting in good faith.[60]

It took Carothers longer to settle a dispute between Villa and the Guggenheim-owned American Smelting and Refining Company. The rebel general had demanded that the company purchase some $500,000 worth of confiscated ores, much of which had been taken from the company, itself, or from its preferred customers. On January 20, Carothers reported that Villa had agreed to return the ores he had confiscated from the company and promised that it would not be required to purchase any ores confiscated from other foreign-owned mines.[61] Thereafter, Villa's

[60]Carothers to State Department, December 30, 31, 1913, NA 312.11/3073, 312.52/104; Villa to Carothers, January 1, 1914, NA 312.52/104; New York Times, February 22, 1914, II, p. 1.

[61]State Department to Carothers, January 19, 1914, NA 312.115an3/84; Carothers to State Department, January 20, 1914, ibid./85.

relations with American Smelting and Refining were cordial. He protected its shipments to the border and it provided him with coal for his railroads.[62]

Carothers was far less successful in securing protection for El Desengaño Mine of Guanacevi, Durango, which was owned jointly by Spanish, Mexican and American citizens. Since the order to confiscate the mine alledgedly came from Villa, Carothers brought the matter to the general's attention. Villa denied having issued the decree. While Carothers was attempting to determine the source of the order, the State Department directed Consul Frederick Simpich at Nogales to take the matter up with Carranza. In response, the first Chief issued a directive that gave local rebel leaders a temporary respite from American diplomatic pressure. Asserting his prerogative as leader of the revolutionary forces, Carranza demanded that all complaints of foreigners be directed to his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Isidro Fabela, only by diplomatic representatives of the country directly concerned.[63] At approximately the same time, Cabrera, in

[62]Clarence C. Clendenen, The United States and Pancho Villa (Ithaca, N.Y.: Published for the American Historical Association, Cornell University Press, 1961), 73-74.

[63]Spanish Ambassador to State Department, January 7, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 786; State Department to Carothers, January 10, 1914, ibid., 787-88; Simpich to State Department, February 19, 1914, ibid., 793; Carothers to State Department, January 11, 12, 1914, NA 312.52/114, 118.

Washington, was giving assurances that the Constitutionalists would respect foreign-owned property. Theoretically there was no contradiction between Carrenza's directive and Cabrera's promises, since each nation was given an opportunity to make representations in behalf of their own citizens. At any rate, Wilson and Bryan paid no heed to the First Chief's newest demand and continued to direct their appeals in behalf of all foreigners directly to Villa and other subordinate rebel leaders.

Further complicating Carothers' efforts, Bryan also involved him in matters that concerned only Mexican citizens. One of the initial issues that Washington had directed him to take up with Villa was the arrest and detention of Luis Terrazas, Jr., the son of a wealthy Chihuahua _hacendado_ and former governor of the state. Villa despised the Terrazas family, as he despised all _hacendados_, and, after capturing Chihuahua, he confiscated the family's holdings, which amounted to millions of acres. When Luis, Jr., took refuge in the British Consulate, he was forceably removed by Villa's men.[64] The plight of this prominent Mexican family attracted considerable attention

[64] Secretary of War to Secretary of State (forwarding letter from General Hugh L. Scott, El Paso), December 13, 1913, _Foreign Relations, 1913_, 905; State Department to Carothers, December 15, 1913, _ibid._, 907; New York _Times_, December 12, 1913, p. 1; _El Paso Morning Times_, December 12, 17, 1913; Alamada, _La Revolución en el Estado de Chihuahua_, II, 68-70.

in the United States. The New York Times condemned Villa's "act of brigandage," and numerous American friends, including Senator Albert B. Fall of New Mexico, appealed to the State Department to intercede.[65]

The Terrazas matter was further confused when Senator Fall appeared in El Paso and began applying pressure on Villa's agents. Fall demanded that Luis, Jr., be released and the family's possessions be returned or he would use his influence in the United States Senate to discredit the Constitutionalist cause. The Senator also spoke to Carothers. Besides his concern for the Terrazas family, Fall revealed that he had contracted for the purchase of some of the Terrazas cattle, and he wanted the special agent to use his influence with Villa to secure their release. The head of the family, Luis, Sr., who was then living in Fall's El Paso home, also sought Carothers' aid in securing the release of his son. Villa agreed that two female members of the family, who had remained in Chihuahua, were free to leave whenever they chose, but he remained indifferent to other appeals. He promised that Luis, Jr., would not be harmed, but insisted that he be held hostage to guarantee that his father would not finance

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[65]New York Times, December 12, 1913, p. 1; Fall to State Department, December 16, 1913/10223. The State Department 812.00 file contains numerous appeals in Terrazas' behalf from Americans and Mexicans.

a counter-revolution in Chihuahua as he had against Madero.[66] As Villa put it to Carothers: "cuando se amara el becerro la vaca no anda muy lejos."[67]

Despite only mixed success in his early relations with General Villa, Carothers immediately formed a high opinion of this bandit-turned-revolutionary. The special agent was especially impressed by the quick, simply justice which this caudillo (chieftain) meted out to his followers and how they adored him. Carothers acknowledged that Villa often committed unspeakable atrocities against the Huertistas; but since the Federals murdered, even hanged, prisoners, Villa felt that he was only fighting fire with fire.[68] The agent continued to be encouraged by the general's pro-American attitude. Overjoyed by the lifting of the arms embargo, Villa had openly proclaimed that

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[66]Carothers to State Department, December 31, 1913, NA 312.52/104; Carothers to State Department, January 28, February 3 (two), 1914/10706, 10780, 10820; Ronald Atkin, Revolution! Mexico, 1910-1920 (New York: The John Day Co., 1970), 164-65. Villa could not always keep his promise. During one of his absences from Chihuahua, some of his underlings, hearing rumors that Terrazas knew the location of 500,000 pesos which had been hidden by the Banco de Minero, hanged the unfortunate hostage but cut him down before he died. Ultimately Terrazas escaped and made his way to safety in El Paso.

In 1912 Luis, Sr., helped finance the Orozco rebellion against the Madero government. See Meyer, Pascual Orozco, 108-109.

[67]Carothers to State Department, February 10, 1914/10903.

[68]Carothers to State Department, February 3, 10, 1914/10820, 10903.

President Wilson was "the most just man in the world. All Mexicans will love him . . ." He also announced that, thereafter, the Villistas would "look upon the United States as our friend."[69] In the enthusiasm of the moment, he promised Carothers that, even if his actions seemed "arbitrary and contrary to custom," he would reveal "the real truth about everything" to President Wilson and would "take the consequences of any of his acts."[70]

Events soon proved that Villa would not always be truthful in his relations with the United States. On February 19, the Associated Press carried a story that Villa had arrested Gustave Brouch, an American, and William S. Benton, an Englishman, on a charge of filibustering against the revolution.[71] The British Embassy in Washington, meanwhile, received a telegram from Mrs. Benton, a Mexican national, who was afraid that her husband, a Scotsman, was a victim of foul play. When the British Ambassador urged the State Department to investigate, both Carothers and the American Consul at Juárez, Thomas Edwards, were directed to see Villa immediately and determine Benton's fate.[72] Before Carothers received the

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[69]"Letting The Guns Into Mexico," Literary Digest, XLVIII (February 14, 1914), 303-304.

[70]Carothers to State Department, February 3, 1914/10820.

[71]New York Times, February 19, 1914, p. 1.

[72]State Department to Carothers and Edwards, February 19, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 842-43.

despatch, he was contacted by friends and relatives of Benton. At their request, he went to Villa and asked what had happened to the Scotsman. Uncharacteristically, the general asked Carothers if he was there in an official capacity. When the agent replied that he was only representing friends, Villa would offer nothing more than assurances that Benton was safe. Although puzzled by Villa's attitude, Carothers returned to El Paso where he found the despatch from the State Department awaited him. He immediately wired Washington his belief that Benton was merely being held until Villa left Juárez the following day. Carothers was confident that Benton was unharmed.[73]

Carothers next decided that Consul Edwards should make an official inquiry, hopefully to insure Benton's safety. When the general was confronted by the consul, he confessed that Benton was dead. He claimed that the Scotsman had come to his headquarters armed with a pistol and had attempted to kill him. Villa would give no details of Benton's death but agreed that his wife might claim his property. Before Edwards could report his findings to Washington, the Department, on the strength of Carothers' telegram, issued a press release giving

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[73]Carothers to State Department, February 19, 1914, ibid., 843; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1784; El Paso Morning Times, February 21, 1914.

assurances of Benton's safety. When the news in Consul Edwards' report was released, it caused an international incident.[74]

The revolutionaries had killed foreigners before and Washington had not been held responsible. But in this case, the State Department, by issuing a statement which it was quickly forced to repudiate, made it appear that the Wilson Administration had attempted to cover up Villa's transgressions. The impression had been growing at home and abroad for weeks that Wilson was on the verge of giving the rebels active support. The lifting of the arms embargo had been viewed as the first step in that direction. If the Administration was going to persist in this policy, European critics demanded that it also make an even greater effort to protect foreign lives and property. This opinion was expressed most vehemently in the British press. Always critical of Wilson's anti-Huerta and non-recognition policies, the British newspapers now placed the blame for Benton's death squarely on the American President's shoulders.[75] Villa had given the British lion's tail a nasty twist; Carothers spent the next few days trying to bandage it.

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[74]Edwards to State Department, February 19, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 843; New York Times, February 21, 1914, p. 1.

[75]"Letting Guns Into Mexico," Literary Digest, XLVIII, 303-304; "The British Press on Benton's Fate," ibid. (March 7, 1914), 481.

The Benton killing, like the persecution of the Spaniards, grew out of Villa's deep-seated hatred of the privileged classes. Benton was a wealthy Chihuahua hacendado. Antagonism between the two dated back to the Madero Revolution but had intensified in the few months preceding Benton's death.[76] Claiming that Benton was a Huertista, Villa had confiscated many of the Scotsman's cattle. Benton apparently went to Juárez on February 18 to protest and seek the release of the remainder of his stock. The Associated Press reported that the rancher's friends and relatives insisted that he was unarmed when he crossed the Rio Grande. These same people revealed to Carothers that they had warned Benton not to go to Juárez and that he had gone anyway, looking for trouble.[77]

In order to answer the critics, Bryan directed Carothers to see Villa immediately and determine exactly how Benton had met his fate. When the special agent returned to Juárez, Villa was gone. He reportedly had departed for Chihuahua in order to begin preparations for his next campaign. Lázaro de la Garza, one of Villa's advisors, assured Carothers that there had been a trial. The next day the American agent was given a copy of the

[76]Clendenen, United States and Pancho Villa, 66.

[77]New York Times, February 21, 1914, p. 1-2; Carothers to State Department, February 20, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 844; Carothers to State Department, February 21, 1914, NA 312.41/127.

trial proceedings. The legal transcript indicated that a court martial had convicted Benton of attempted murder and of actively assisting both Orozco and Huerta. The unanimous death dentence had been carried out immediately by firing squad. Too readily the American agent accepted the trial records as fact and sent them to Washington without further investigation.[78] He did not know that the transcript was fraudulent, designed to placate the State Department. In reality, Benton, after quarreling with Villa, had been murdered, clubbed to death by Rudolfo Fierro, Villa's personal assassin.[79]

At first, the British Cabinet was prepared to accept the report of the trial and requested nothing more than a thorough investigation. But the rumor persisted that Benton had committed no crime and was the victim of foul play. As a result, Foreign Secretary Grey was forced to endure a grilling by Parliament. In answering the questions, he acknowledged that he did not hold the United States responsible for Benton's death. With no adequate

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[78] Carothers to State Department, February 21 (three), 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 845-46; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1784-85.

[79] Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1785; Guzmán, Memoirs of Pancho Villa, 134-35. Months later Villa confessed to Carothers that Benton had been taken to Samalayuca, just South of Juárez, where he was killed while watching his own grave being dug.

means of communicating directly with Villa, he explained, he had relied on the diplomatic representatives of the United States, who, out of good will, had made an investigation. Having weathered the crisis in Parliament, the Cabinet now faced the wrath of the press, which heaped vituperation upon the Foreign Secretary for not adequately insuring the safety of British citizens abroad.[80] Under pressure Grey notified the Wilson Administration that, although "His Majesty's Government . . . can take no measures against Villa at the present time, . . . they will take whatever steps are possible to secure justice being done whenever the opportunity occurs."[81] While Grey's memorandum appeared to be a veiled threat to the Roosevelt Corallary to the Monroe Doctrine, it was probably more the case of a wounded lion trying to retain some pride.

Before the episode ended, it became still more complex. As soon as Carothers and Edwards found out that Benton was dead, they requested that the body be returned to the family. Villa, realizing that he would be caught in a lie, refused to release it. Otherwise he seemed quite cooperative. He agreed that Mrs. Benton could visit the

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[80] The Times (London), February 24, 1914, p. 9; New York Times, February 23, 1914, p. 2; ibid., February 24, 1914, p. 1; "The British Press on Benton's Fate," Literary Digest, XLVIII, 481.

[81] British Embassy to State Department, March 3, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 858-59.

grave-site, which he promised would be well marked.[82]

The British Government, meanwhile, requested an inspection of the body to determine the exact cause of death. Bryan, confident that a medical examination would vindicate Villa and the United States, directed Carothers to go to Chihuahua, see Villa, and request permission for a commission of examiners, including a British subject, to inspect the body. Consul Letcher was instructed to aid the special agent, but he went to Villa on his own, before Carothers departed from El Paso. Having quarreled often with Letcher in the past, Villa communicated his answer directly to Carothers. He agreed to the medical examination and offered to arrange a special train to transport the commission to Chihuahua.[83] Villa acceded to the investigation because he had arranged a rather naive ruse. He sent a special train to bring Benton's body from Samalayuca to Chihuahua. Trying to hide the fact that Benton had been clubbed to death, Villa, thinking that bullet holes would fool the medical examiners, had a squad

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[82]Carothers to State Department, February 21, 23, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 846-49; Edwards to State Department, February 22, 24, 1914, ibid., 847, 850.

[83]British Embassy to State Department, February 24, 1914, ibid., 851-52; State Department to Letcher, February 25, 1914, ibid., 852; Carothers to State Department, February 26, 1914, ibid., 853; State Department to Carothers, February 25, 1914, NA 312.41/130a; El Paso Morning Times, February 26, 1914.

of men fire a volley into the decomposing cadaver.[84] Luckily for Villa, his medical knowledge was never tested by the examining commission.

While Carothers, Edwards, and Letcher were dealing with Villa, Wilson and Bryan decided to appeal to Carranza as well. On February 24, before plans for the medical examination of Benton's body were finalized, Consul Simpich at Nogales was instructed to urge the First Chief to order the cadaver released to the victim's family. Indignant at not being consulted at the outset, Carranza delayed his answer for four days. Then he reminded Wilson and Bryan that he had earlier informed them that all representations in behalf of foreigners should be made directly to his headquarters only by representatives of the nation concerned. It was improper, he insisted, especially since Mrs. Benton was Mexican, for the United States to involve itself in the Benton case. He announced, also, that officials of his government would make a full investigation. Accordingly, the investigating commission, which had been organized by Carothers and Edwards, was turned back by Carranza's officials as it attempted to board the train in Juárez.[85]

[84]Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1785; Guzmán, Memoirs of Pancho Villa, 136-37. Months later Villa told Carothers of his plans to trick the medical examiners.

[85]State Department to Simpich, February 17, 24, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 849-50, 855-56; Simpich to State Department, February 26, 28, 1914, ibid., 853, 856-57; El

Again Carranza's pugnacity had prevented Wilson and Bryan from exercising an influence in Mexican affairs. The First Chief was motivated solely by a desire to have other nations respect the right of Mexicans to conduct their own investigations. He and his advisors definitely believed that a blow had been struck for Mexican sovereignty and against American interventionism under the auspices of the Monroe Doctrine.[86] In the process, much of the onus for the Benton murder was transferred to Carranza. Quite unwittingly, he rescued Villa from a ticklish situation. Since the true nature of the Benton killing was still not known in Washington, Wilson's image of Carranza was again darkened, while Villa's was hardly tarnished.

Paso Morning Times, March 1-2, 1914. Carranza's agents in Washington were greatly disappointed at their chief's refusal to cooperate with the United States and Great Britain in investigating the Benton case. Ever since Cabrera's arrival in Washington, they had been attempting to cultivate a favorable impression of the revolution. All their efforts, they felt, were being sacrificed for the First Chief's narrow-minded nationalism. Their differences precipitated a short but intense conflict between the diplomatic agents in Washington and Carranza and his cabinet. See Kenneth J. Grieb, "El Caso Benton y la diplomacia de la Revolución," Historia Mexicana, XVIII (October-December, 1969), 299-301.

[86] Fabela, Historia Diplomatica de la Revolución Mexicana, I, 277-84; Juan Barragán, "From the Memoirs of Don Venustiano Carranza," translator not named, El Universal (Mexico City), April 27, 1930, in National Archives, Record Group 76, Records of the Special Claims Commission, United States and Mexico, created under the Claims Convention of September 10, 1923, File no. 148; hereinafter cited as NA, RG76/148.

Until the Benton incident, Carothers had made El Paso his headquarters. Afterwards, Bryan deemed it advisable for the agent to remain constantly at Villa's side. But Carranza's recent declarations caused Carothers to pause. "I can see that from now on conditions will be very different," he wrote to Bryan. "I can do more good by having the good will of both Carranza and Villa." He recommended, therefore, that he go first to Sonora and, hopefully, obtain the First Chief's permission before proceeding to Villa's headquarters. With the Secretary of State's approval, Carothers arranged for an interview with Carranza at Nogales. By this time, the First Chief had made a preliminary investigation of the Benton killing and could see the advisability of having the American agent accompany Villa. Having made his public pronouncements in defense of Mexican sovereignty, Carranza gave his permission. In fact, he gave Carothers a code book for facilitating communication with Constitutionalist officials. After the meeting, the special agent was confident that American relations with both Villa and Carranza would be more cordial in the future.[87]

Despite the furor caused by the Benton affair, it did

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[87] State Department to Carothers, February 25, March 1, 1914, NA 312.41/130a, 152; Carothers to State Department, March 1, 3, 6, 1914, ibid./152, 166, 175; Carothers to State Department, March 4, 7, 1914/11048, 11093; El Paso Morning Times, March 3, 1914.

not alter the Wilson Administration's policy. The nature of Carothers' mission, however, did change. Before the affair, he had merely carried out the Department's orders and reported the results. During the course of the incident, he began to exercise considerable initiative of his own. He, not Bryan, had seen the necessity of his establishing cordial relations with Carranza. At the same time, he wrote to Bryan, revealing his own conception of what his job should entail:

> I wish you to know that my desire to do this work is prompted by my sincere affection for the Mexican people, acquired during twenty-five years residence among them, and I expect to live the balance of my life in Mexico. I have realized that there is still hope for them to settle their difficulties without intervention, and it has been my desire to contribute my efforts to further that end.

He also acknowledged that incidents like the Benton murder were lamentable, but that the revolutionaries, most of whom were peóns, had so long been treated like savages that they responded in kind. He closed his letter by declaring his intention "to hold him [Villa] within bounds as far as possible."[88] Bryan apparently agreed with Carothers' view, because he relieved the agent of the responsibility of further investigating the Benton affair. "Your influence with Villa," wrote the Secretary of State, "should not be jeopardized by [my] putting you in a

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[88]Carothers to State Department, February 23, 1914/11454.

position where you might offend him."[89]

Judging from their correspondence and actions, both of the agents in Mexico felt a responsibility for aiding the Constitutionalists. They differed significantly over means to that end: Lind, fearing revolutionary excesses and looking to large-scale American direction of Mexican affairs, demanded military intervention; Carothers, understanding the violence of the revolution and willing to give the Mexicans a chance to settle their own affairs, hoped only to restrain the revolutionaries enough to prevent intervention. As events were to prove, Wilson was leaning toward Lind's position but as yet had no plausible pretext for adopting it. For the time being, Carothers' position had to suffice.

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[89]State Department to Carothers, February 27, 1914, NA 312.41/138.

CHAPTER VII

A FRIEND INDEED

The months of March and April, 1914, were pregnant with events which determined the course of the Mexican Revolution and the course of relations between the United States and Mexico. Given the nature of Wilson's Mexican policy, his agents inevitably became involved in these events. While John Lind was sweltering and seething in Vera Cruz, George Carothers was constantly on the move, accompanying General Villa's Division of the North. Villa provided the American agent with a passport which gave him access to the battle lines and allowed the two to be in constant contact. All revolutionary civil and military authorities were directed to give the American every assistance. Villa allowed him to use the Constitutionalists' telegraph lines and placed trains at his disposal, so that messages could be sent out by messenger. With Bryan's approval, Carothers established a communications system, using Zach L. Cobb, the Customs Collector at El Paso, as an intermediary. Cobb knew and maintained cordial relations with Constitutionalist officials on the border and was able to ascertain Villa's whereabouts at any time. With a minimum of delay, he was able to forward

instructions from the Department to Carothers and relay the agent's responses to Washington.[1]

While Villa massed his forces and stockpiled munitions for the upcoming Torreón campaign, Carothers sought to arrange for the safety of foreigners who lived in the city. As early as January 30, the agent reported that he doubted if Villa would be too concerned for the safety of non-combatants. Then on February 4, the Associated Press quoted the general as declaring that the Spaniards in Torreón could expect no mercy. Troubled as much by the implied savagery in this pronouncement as by the possible diplomatic repercussions, Bryan again directed Carothers to remind Villa of the adverse world opinion that would result from his failure to observe "the rules of war and respect the person and property of foreigners."[2] The special agent replied that the press quoted Villa accurately but that the Secretary of State should understand the context within which the general had made such comments. Villa, being unsophisticated, Carothers explained, was flattered when representatives of the press paid him so much attention. As a means of impressing gatherings of reporters, the agent further explained, Villa

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[1]Carothers to State Department, February 3, 10, 1914/10820, 10903.

[2]Carothers to State Department, January 30, 1914, NA 312.11/3243; State Department to Carothers, February 6, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 790-91; New York Times, February 4, 1914, p. 2.

was inclined to strut about and make bombastic pronouncements. Carothers also noted that Villa, in confidence, had revealed that he openly threatened the Spaniards in hopes of frightening them into withholding support from the Huertistas. He would not harm them unless they actually did support Huerta.[3]

Still not satisfied, Carothers sought the aid of General Hugh Lenox Scott, the commander at El Paso's Fort Bliss, in promoting the safety of foreigners. The special agent first attempted to arrange a meeting of the two soldiers in Juárez, but War Department officials did not think it "expedient" for Scott to cross the border.[4] Carothers, therefore, arranged a rendezvous on the international bridge which linked El Paso and Juárez. For two hours, on the night of February 18, the two generals and the State Department agent sat in the back seat of an automobile and discussed the responsibilities of a civilized soldier. Scott impressed upon Villa that, for reasons of good politics and not merely for humanitarian ones, he should cease his harsh treatment of foreigners; otherwise, he would so prejudice foreign opinion that he would not be able to secure foreign support should he need it in the future. The American general also pointed

[3]Carothers to State Department, February 8, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914/791; Carothers to State Department, February 10, 1914/10903.

[4]Carothers to State Department, February 3, 1914, and State Department to Carothers, February 4, 1914/10775.

up the favorable impression to be derived from humanitarian treatment of prisoners of war. At the conclusion of the conference, General Scott presented Villa with a copy of the Hague Convention Rules of Civilized Warfare, which some of his officers had roughly translated into Spanish. Carothers was elated at the generals' cordial relations and optimistically predicted that the meeting would produce "excellent results."[5]

Next the special agent attempted to establish a neutral zone for foreigners outside Torreón. Villa was amenable; so Carothers, choosing to remain constantly at the general's side, sent a trusted friend, E. F. Fletcher, to Torreón to speak with the leaders of the foreign colony. Fletcher quickly ascertained that most of the foreigners were unwilling to retire from the city. Although they were relieved by Villa's promises to protect their interests, most preferred to remain near their property. At length, Fletcher and the Acting American Consular Agent, John Bonnet, designated several prominent buildings, in addition to the various consulates, as sanctuaries to which foreigners might retire when the battle began. All nationalities of the foreign colony

[5]Carothers to State Department, February 19, 1914/10917; El Paso Morning Times, February 20, 1914; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1766; Maj. Gen. Hugh Lenox Scott, Some Memories of a Soldier (New York: The Century Co., 1928), 500-502.

except the Spaniards were satisfied with this arrangement. The Spaniards refused to trust the United States to look after their best interests. A Spaniard, moreover, told General José R. Velasco, the Federal commander, that Fletcher was spying for the Constitutionalists, and, during his return trip to the border, Carothers' messenger was arrested and returned to Torreón. Only after an intensive interrogation by General Velasco was he allowed to return to the border.[6]

Bryan, meanwhile, had directed Charge' O'Shaughnessy to appeal to Huerta for aid in establishing a neutral zone in Torreón. Although the old general agreed to cooperate in the matter, O'Shaughnessy reported that he did not trust the usurper's word. As suspected, several days later the charge' informed Bryan that Huerta had never sent instructions to General Velasco. The dictator told O'Shaughnessy that he did not expect an attack on Torreón in the near future but agreed that, if he was informed when the attack was about to begin, he would instruct

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[6]Carothers to State Department, February 8, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 791; Carothers to State Department, February 9, 1914, NA 125.36582/58; Carothers to State Department, February 10, 13, 22, 23, 24, 1914/10903, 10879, 10952, 10953, 10995; John R. Silliman, American Consul, Saltillo, to State Department, February 21, 1914/11044; State Department to Carothers, February 8, 1914/10820. Since Villa's rail lines were tied up, Fletcher traveled to Torreón by way of Eagle Pass and Saltillo. Silliman, who was informed by an eye-witness, reported the details of Fletcher's arrest and detainment.

Velasco to take every precaution for the safety of foreigners. Although such notification would give the Federals an advantage, the charge' suggested that Carothers contact him when the battle was about to begin, so that he could again appeal to Huerta. Evidencing more concern for the safety of noncombatants than for a Constitutionalist victory, Bryan instructed Carothers to notify O'Shaughnessy on the eve of Villa's attack.[7]

Sensing the advisability of having Carranza's support for the protection of foreign interests, Carothers left Villa's side temporarily and again traveled to Sonora to confer with the First Chief at Agua Prieta, across the border from Douglas, Arizona. Surprisingly cooperative, Carranza promised to instruct Villa to give notice to foreigners before the battle began. In order to facilitate communications with Constitutionalist headquarters, the First Chief also gave the American agent an itinerary of his movements.[8]

On March 10, as Villa began his march, Carothers did, indeed notify O'Shaughnessy, who, in turn, informed Huerta. The usurper, thereupon, assured the charge' that

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[7]State Department to O'Shaughnessy, February 14, 1914/10870; O'Shaughnessy to State Department, February 17, 25, March 3, 1914/10913, 10983, 11040; State Department to Carothers, March 5, 1914/11040.

[8]Carothers to State Department, March 9, 10, 1914/11103, 11117.

General Velasco would be ordered to "spare no efforts" to insure the safety of foreigners.[9] Bryan, not satisfied with even these arrangements, again ordered Carothers to attempt to arrange a neutral zone outside the city. Having discovered from friends in Torreón that General Velasco would likely arrest him if he entered the city, Carothers asked for detailed written instructions, so that the Federals, if they took him into custody, would have no justifiable reason for detaining or prosecuting him. Armed with new instructions from Washington, Carothers again joined Villa on March 19, as the Division of the North launched a massive assault on the suburbs of Torreón.[10]

On March 27, after Villa captured Gomez Palacio and was preparing his attack on Torreon proper, Carothers again attempted to establish a neutral zone. Instead of entering Torreon himself, he prudently decided to send the British Vice Consul at Gómez Palacio, H. Cunard Cummings, whose relations with the Federals were very friendly. At the same time, Villa forced the British consul to carry an unconditional surrender demand to General Velasco. The rebel general also promised that food and shelter would be

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[9]Carothers to State Department, conveying text of Carothers to O'Shaughnessy, March 10, 1914/11121; O'Shaughnessy to State Department, March 11, 1914/11150.

[10]State Department to Carothers, February 18, March 13, 16, 1914/10983, 10995, 11176; Carothers to State Department, March 15, 17, 1914/11176, 11203.

provided for foreigners at the nearby villages of Aviles and Lerdo. Neither proposal was accepted. Velasco refused to surrender unless he was allowed to evacuate his men, and the foreigners, fearful of running a gauntlet between the opposing armies, chose to remain in the city and take refuge in the cellars of a few well marked buildings. The following day, the final attack began. On April 2, the surviving Federals evacuated under the cover of a dust storm and the Villistas occupied the city. In the course of some of the fiercest fighting of the entire revolution, not one foreigner was killed or wounded.[11] Although no neutral zone was established, the American effort made both sides conscious of the welfare of non-combatants.

During the course of the Torreón campaign, Villa allowed Carothers to periodically send brief accounts of the rebels' progress to Washington. These reports did not give details of the relative fighting ability of the opposing armies or the number of casualties suffered by either. Usually he merely reported the capture of small towns, such as Bermejillo, Tlahualilo, and Gómez Palacio, and, finally, the fall of Torreón itself. Since these reports often provided the most advanced information from

[11]Carothers to State Department, April 1, 1914/11366; I. M. Ulmer, Acting Consular Agent, Torreón, to Hamm, April 8, 1914/11706; Hamm to State Department, April 13, 1914/11706; New York Times, April 10, 1914, p. 2.

the front, the State Department released the news to the press.[12] Huerta, on the other hand, did not allow the Mexico City press to reveal the magnitude of his defeats during the Torreón campaign. Consequently, the reports that appeared in the American press differed dramatically from those in Mexico City.[13] Puzzled by the American newspaper accounts, Huerta's consular inspector, who was in El Paso at the time of the Torreón campaign, began searching for the source of the reports. On April 2, the day Torreón fell, he reported to Mexico City that one of his subordinates had intercepted a message from Carothers to Washington, imploring his superiors not to release any more news, since the outcome of the battle was still in the balance and any news might encourage the Federals to send in reinforcements.[14]

[12]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, March 23, 27, 28, April 1, 3, 1914/11241, 11315, 11323, 11366, 11386; New York Times, March 22, 1914, II, p. 2; ibid., March 24, 25, 27, April 2, 3, 1914, p. 1.

[13]Mexican Herald, March 21-April 9, 1914; El Imparcial, March 22-April 9, 1914. During the seesaw of battle, Huerta reported minor reverses for the rebels as major victories for the Federals. Throughout the campaign he flatly denied that his forces were losing. As late as April 9, one week after the fall of Torreón, he had not admitted to the press that General Velasco had been defeated. He claimed, instead, that the Federal troops had evacuated the city only to take up more defensible positions in the highlands.

[14]Inspección General de Consulados de México en Los Estados Unidos de America, El Paso, Texas, a Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, March 31, April 2, 1914, AGRE, L-E-795, Leg. 3, L-E-787, Leg. 8.

On April 5, Huerta released what he claimed to be a translation of Carothers' despatch. He charged that, as a consular agent accredited to his government, Carothers was guilty of unethical conduct, that he was openly siding with the revolutionaries. The dictator also insisted that the agent's claims of victory for Villa had been premature and had caused the reinforcements, which might have come to the aid of the Federals at Torreón, to turn back. He then withdrew Carothers' consular exequator and declared him persona non grata in Mexico. The State Department promptly denied Huerta's charges but, in the process, was itself guilty of inaccuracy by insisting that Carothers had reported only information concerning the safety of foreigners.[15]

Huerta was even more erroneous in his claims. His consul in El Paso had misinterpreted Carothers' despatch. In the note in question, sent April 1, Carothers had reported on the status of foreigners in Torreón; but Cobb, in forwarding it to Washington, added a clause at the request

[15] O'Shaughnessy to State Department, April 5, 1914, NA 125.36582/67; State Department to O'Shaughnessy, April 6, 1914, ibid./71a; Lt. G. M. Courts to Admiral Fletcher, April 5, 1914/11459; War Department to State Department, April 7, 1914/11459; New York Times, April 4, 6, 1914, p. 2; Mexican Herald, April 6, 1914. A consular exequator is a statement of permission, usually in the form of an executive order, given to a consul, which grants him authority to make representations in behalf of his nationals. See Stuart, American Diplomatic and Consular Practice, 298-301.

of local Constitutionalist officials. They pointed out to him that they allowed Carothers' despatches to come out of Mexico on their telegraph lines as a courtesy; but now they requested that the State Department refrain from releasing their contents to the press, because the battle was in a critical stage.[16] Carothers, therefore, was not guilty of the charges leveled by Huerta. The usurper, well aware of the agent's increasingly friendly relations with Villa, had reason enough to want him removed from northern Mexico; his consul's misinterpretation of Carothers' note of April 1, provided the old general with an adequate pretext for recalling the agent's consular exequator.[17] At any rate the Department paid no heed to Huerta's directive and Carothers continued as if he still had some recognized official status in Mexico.[18]

Villa's victory at Torreón, followed quickly by triumphs at San Pedro de las Colonias and Viesca, was by

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[16] Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, April 1, 1914/11366.

[17] Before the Torreón campaign, Huerta's consuls along the border had reported Carothers' activities among the revolutionaries in northern Mexico. These consular despatches may be found in AGRE, L-E-773, Leg. 12.

[18] Bryan decided that since the Administration had not acknowledged as legitimate any of Huerta's actions since October 10, 1913, there was no need to pay any heed to the revocation of Carothers' exequator. See Bryan to Lansing, April 6, 1914, National Archives, Record Group 59, Papers of Robert Lansing, General Correspondence, Vol. 2.

all odds his greatest. In terms of strategy and men and materials deployed, it was the most impressive Constitutionalist victory to date.[19] Not only did Villa cover himself with glory on the battlefield, but his humaneness in occupying the stricken city also caused his stock to rise in Washington and throughout the world. He maintained complete order, allowed no looting, and quickly established a civil government. He encouraged the local merchants to reopen their shops and to reprovision their depleted stocks via his railroad. Meanwhile, he fed the poor from his army's rations. For the first time in the revolution, the victor did not execute his prisoners, and the wounded received the same treatment as the wounded victors.[20]

A few days after the occupation of the city, Carothers wrote to General Hugh Scott, insisting that Villa's humane treatment of prisoners was a direct result of their conference on the El Paso-Juárez bridge. Scott, who recently had been appointed Assistant Chief of Staff of the Army, sent the letter to the President. Showing his

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[19]Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 24-26. Quirk suggests that the victories at San Pedro and Viesca, where Villa caught and destroyed General Velasco's armies, were as important as the one at Torreón, because they eliminated any chance of counterattack.

[20]Ulmer to Hamm, April 8, 1914/11706; Hamm to State Department, April 13, 19, 1914/11703, 11706; Carothers to State Department, April 6, 1914/11419; El Paso Morning Times, April 3-5, 1914; John Reed, Insurgent Mexico (New York: International Pub., 1969), 144.

own gratification for the rebel general's recently acquired humaneness, Wilson, in reply, conceded that "General Villa certainly seems capable of some good things."[21]

On the heels of these good reports, however, came disturbing news of Villa's renewed intimidation of the Spaniards. The day after he occupied Torreón, he had all the Spaniards congregated into three buildings. That afternoon he went before them and, in a lengthy harangue, again charged that they had openly aided the Huertistas. He insisted that he had enough evidence to execute several of them. Because of these few, he claimed, all would be in danger if he allowed them loose on the streets; therefore, he was going to deport all of them to El Paso for their own good. An investigating committee would be established in Juárez, and all who could establish their innocence would be allowed to return to Torreón. The property of those who could not would be confiscated. Carothers and Acting Consular Agent I. M. Ulmer were present when Villa addressed the gathering. Both of them, along with Consul Hamm of Durango, British Consul Cunard Cummings of Gómez Palacio, and several members of Villa's staff, appealed to the caudillo to reverse his decree but

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[21]Carothers to Scott, April 9, 1914, and Wilson to Scott, April 16, 1914, Hugh L. Scott Papers, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress, Box 15.

their pleas were unavailing.[22]

Carothers, his use of the telegraph restricted because of the Constitutionalists' military needs, hastened to El Paso to file his report on the battle of Torreón and the subsequent persecution of the Spaniards. In Juárez, he found Carranza, who was in the process of moving his headquarters from Sonora to Chihuahua. Consequently, Bryan directed the agent to go over Villa's head and appeal directly to Carranza in behalf of the Spaniards. But the First Chief refused to countermand his general's orders. Instead, he, too, insisted that all Spaniards should leave Mexico before the Constitutionalists reached Mexico City. Echoing Villa, he charged them with supporting Huerta and warned that they could expect no mercy once the revolutionaries seized power. Hoping that General Scott could work his magic a second time, Carothers even arranged for him to meet with Carranza on the international bridge. This conference, however, induced no change of heart on the part of the flinty old First Chief. With Carranza's attitude coinciding with Villa's, Carothers warned that Washington should expect more depredations against Spaniards in the future and that he could do nothing to

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[22]Carothers to State Department, April 6, 1914/11419; Ulmer to Hamm, April 8, 1914/11706; Hamm to State Department, April 13, 1914/11706; El Paso Morning Times, April 7, 1914.

prevent them.[23]

In the meantime, train loads of Spaniards began streaming into Juárez. Most of the refugees were destitute, having been forced to leave Torreón with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. Since they knew that Carothers had spoken in their behalf, they looked to him for aid and relief. When the special agent appealed to Washington for guidance in helping the unfortunates, the State Department secured Red Cross aid and, so that he might continue negotiating with the Constitutionalist leaders, relieved him of the responsibility of helping the refugees.[24]

When Carothers again approached Carranza, the First Chief fell back upon his earlier issued directive, in which, during the Benton affair, he had notified Washington that he would accept representations in behalf of foreigners only from the diplomatic representatives of the nations directly concerned. Puzzled by Carranza's hot and cold attitude, Carothers made inquiries into the

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[23]State Department to Carothers, April 6, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 796; Carothers to State Department, April 7, 1914, ibid., 798; Scott to Mrs. Scott, April 9, 1914, Scott Papers, Box 4; New York Times, April 8, 1914, p. 7; El Paso Morning Times, April 8, 1914, El País, April 11, 1914.

[24]Carothers to State Department, April 8, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 799; State Department to Carothers, April 8, 1914, ibid., 799; El Paso Morning Times, April 9, 1914.

reasons for the First Chief's renewed recalcitrance and discovered that it resulted largely from the advices of his Secretary of Gobernación, Rafael Zubarán Capmany, and Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Isidro Fabela, both of whom were intensely anti-American. The special agent, therefore, approached Carranza through a lesser advisor, Roberto V. Pesqueira, the former governor of Sonora. By this means, on April 12, Carothers secured an unofficial agreement with Carranza to the effect that, if his instructions specifically stated that a request for the protection of foreign interests had been made by that nation's diplomatic representative accredited to Washington, Constitutionalist headquarters would take the matter under consideration. Two days later, Fabela officially notified Carothers that this procedure would be acceptable in the future.[25]

During the course of these negotiations, Carothers' reports pointed up the apparent reasons why Carranza's and Villa's attitudes toward the United States differed so markedly. He noted that the First Chief seemed to fear that if he was too friendly toward the United States he

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[25] Carothers to State Department, April 9, 11 (two), 12, 14, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 801, 804-806. Carothers did not state what positions the above named Constitutionalist advisors held. For the nature of their offices, see Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, I, 219, 424.

might in some way compromise himself in the eyes of his followers by seeming less than nationalistic. Villa, on the other hand, feared nothing, Carothers reported, and no matter what his followers thought, he acted according to his own sense of justice. Because of the contrasting attitude of the two leaders, Carothers recommended that he make all his representations to Villa. He added, also, that American consuls in northern Mexico could probably secure results faster by dealing with "authorities de facto in places where difficulties arise" rather than by referring them to Carranza.[26]

Although more important matters soon preoccupied him, Carothers, as part of his duties, continued to work for a favorable settlement for the Spaniards. He was not successful in every case, but by the end of June, he had worked out an arrangement whereby most of the refugees were allowed to return to their property. Throughout the remainder of the year, nonetheless, there continued to be isolated cases of revolutionary depredations against Spaniards but there were no more instances, as in the case Chihuahua and Torreón, of mass confiscations and deportations.[27]

[26]Carothers to State Department, April 11, 12, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 804-805.

[27]Carothers to State Department, June 21, 1914, NA 312.52/335. The 312.52 (Protection by the United States of Spanish Subjects in Mexico) file in the National Archives contains the case histories of the State Department's

In no other sector had the Constitutionalist forces by this time achieved the success of Villa's Division of the North. Separated from Carranza's government by the Sierra Madre Occidental, Villa, although he repeatedly professed his loyalty to the First Chief, appeared to be a power unto himself. To forestall any thought of independent action by Villa and to take advantage of his victories, Carranza decided in March, 1914, to move the seat of his provisional government from Sonora to Chihuahua. The First Chief and the officials of his government arrived in the city of Chihuahua as Villa was mopping up the Federalist armies at San Pedro. The campaign completed, Villa returned to Chihuahua, and there the two caudillos met for the first time since the Madero revolution.[28]

At first there was harmony; the First Chief commended Villa for his recent victories and Villa reaffirmed his loyalty to the First Chief. But Villa quickly became disenchanted with some of Carranza's appointees, particularly with General Manuel Chao, who was made governor of Chihuahua. As a soldier, moreover, Villa viewed with

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efforts to aid the Spaniards. For representative examples, see Foreign Relations, 1914, 806-38.

[28]Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, I, 425, 433-41; Alamada, La Revolución en el Estado de Chihuahua, II, 86-88, 95; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 16-19.

mounting suspicion the First Chief's "sweet-scented" civilian advisors. Because they did not fight, Villa considered them slackers and less than genuine revolutionaries. Carranza, himself, made the mistake of pointing out to Villa their differences in origin and political training. From this time on, Villa disliked the First Chief. He later reminisced: "I saw that I could not open my heart to him . . . There was nothing in common between that man and me."[29] The breach between the two rebel leaders as yet was small but it boded ill for the future of the revolution.

Carothers was greatly disappointed at the lack of cooperation between the two chieftains. "I had expected when Carranza arrived that complete fusion would result between him and Villa," he wrote to Bryan, "but such is not the case." Noting that Villa still went about his business raising men and money, purchasing munitions, and planning his next campaign without consulting the First Chief, Carothers further lamented, "Carranza has not assumed control of anything so far."[30] The American agent was even more disheartened when he realized the extent of their mutual antagonism. While in El Paso after the Torreón

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[29] Guzmán, Memoirs of Pancho Villa, 189; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 18.

[30] Carothers to State Department, April 9, 1914/11461; copy in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 50.

campaign, he found that the Villista officials and the newly arrived Carrancista officials quarreled constantly. One source of the antagonism, he discovered from conversations with some of Villa's advisors, was that Carranza resented their friendly attitude toward the United States. The reason for his own refusal to be more friendly, they charged, was to make himself appear more nationalistic than they. When Carothers asked what would happen if Carranza openly offended the United States, Lázaro de la Garza, an intimate of Villa, replied that "Villa would not stand for it" and would "instruct Carranza to change his policy or get out."[31]

Whether de la Garza's comments were designed purely to discredit Carranza or were a sincere statement of the Villistas' attitude toward the United States, they were about to be put to the test by a drastic turn in the relations between Wilson and Huerta. Meanwhile, the Administration was gravely concerned over the estrangement between Villa and Carranza and directed Carothers to secure as much information as possible bearing on the relations between the two and to determine the "probable alignment of subordinates in the event of an open rupture. . . ."[32]

In Vera Cruz, meanwhile, John Lind was allowing his

[31]Carothers to State Department, April 12, 1914/11755.

[32]State Department to Carothers, April 13, 1914/11479.

anxieties to drive him to the brink of paranoia. His trepidations began in February with the appearance of a scurrilous cartoon journal entitled Mister Lind, which seemed to focus anti-Americanism in Huertista Mexico directly at him. The March issue was even more vituperative than the first. They both pictured him as the personification of everything that was bad in Yankee imperialism. In February, also, John R. Silliman, the American Consul in Saltillo, reported that Lind was the subject of a very popular anti-American satire being dramatized in a local theatre. That same month, James Creelman, an American journalist who had earlier gained fame by reporting a personal interview with President Porfirio Díaz, which helped to spawn the revolution, published an article in a New York newspaper, the contents of which were widely circulated in Mexico. It was intensely critical of Lind's clandestine encouragement of the revolutionaries and, by implication, blamed him for the death of hundreds killed in the civil war. Not surprisingly, Admiral Fletcher reported that Lind seemed "disturbed and not in the best of health and shows fear for his personal safety." Edith O'Shaughnessy, wife of the American charge', also commented on the special agent's disturbed state of mind. Because of Lind's anxiety, Admiral Fletcher despatched a permanent guard of Bluejackets and

Marines to the consulate.[33]

Allowing his emotions to rule, Lind, in his hatred for Huerta, refused to seek any settlement with the dictator save the destruction of his regime by military force. In mid-March he shunned an opportunity to reopen peaceful talks when Huerta, aware that his sources of credit were not inexhaustible, sent his recently appointed Minister of Foreign Relations, José López Portillo y Rojas, to Vera Cruz to speak with Lind. Portillo y Rojas promised that if Wilson would lift the "money embargo" and retore the "arms embargo," Huerta would resign after elections to be held in July. Lind, in reply, stated his conviction that President Wilson "would not recede one iota" from his previously stated demand that Huerta eliminate himself immediatley. In reporting the Mexican diplomat's proposal to Washington, Lind urged that it be rejected outright. He insisted that Huerta could not be trusted to deal in good faith and that the offer for ewnewed negotiations was designed only to "induce non-action by the United States." Wilson and Bryan agreed. Despite the fact that Wilson informed the press that Portillo y Rojas was an honorable man and his proposals were worthy of consideration, he did

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[33]Fletcher to Daniels, February 4, 1914, Daniels Papers, Box 39; Silliman to State Department, February 11, 1914/10928; O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 194, 229-30; Stephenson, Lind, 257; Mister Lind, I (February, March, 1914), in Lind Papers, Box 13.

not even instruct Lind to pursue the parleys past the initial conversation. Portillo y Rojas, therefore, returned to Mexico City without a formal response to Huerta's latest proposition.[34]

Shortly after Portillo y Rojas's departure, Nelson O'Shaughnessy, suffering from sciatica, came to the warmer climate of Vera Cruz at his doctor's instructions. Unable to eliminate his frustrations by direct action against Huerta, Lind displaced them by attacking O'Shaughnessy. Ever since his own failure in November to secure Huerta's resignation by diplomatic pressure, Lind had resented the fact that O'Shaughnessy had continued to seek a more honorable way for the dictator to eliminate himself. At the time, the special agent had warned Washington that the charge' was being duped. After that, he grew increasingly suspicious of O'Shaughnessy's continued friendly relations with Huerta and his officials. Lind was particularly chagrined by the fact that Mrs. O'Shaughnessy was so fond of the old dictator. Huerta, moreover, returned their friendship and, at official receptions and other social occasions, went out of his way to give them his attention.[35]

[34]Lind to State Department, March 19, 1914/11218; New York Times, March 19-23, 1914, p. 1. Neither Wilson nor Bryan revealed publicly that they would not negotiate with Huerta but, when the British Ambassador inquired of their intentions, Wilson replied that he would not. See Grieb, United States and Huerta, 119.

[35]Lind to State Department, November 15, 1913, February 17, 22, 1914/9760, 17169, 10954; Lind to Wilson, January 10, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 101. At

Lind saw sinister implications in all this but especially in O'Shaughnessy's arrival in Vera Cruz so soon after the departure of Portillo y Rojas. In a personal letter to Bryan, Lind insisted that the charge's stated claim for coming—to mend his health—was a subterfuge, that he was actually there as Huerta's spy. He had come at the dictator's behest to ferret out Washington's true response to his recent overture.[36] Despite his suspicions, Lind did not think O'Shaughnessy intentionally disloyal but that somehow his Catholic background was betraying him into supporting the Church-backed dictator. "I guess," he wrote to Bryan, "the explanation is that he was raised by Tammany, educated by the Jesuits and . . . corresponds with Cardinal Gibbons." The special agent also concluded that the charge' had been corrupted by long residence abroad. "He has never drawn a breath of American air," Lind lamented. With O'Shaughnessy's arrival in Vera Cruz, Lind's

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the Pass Christian cnnference, Lind must have revealed his displeasure for the O'Shaughnessys' friendship with Huerta. In the last cited item above, Lind explains at length the suspicions he had expressed verbally.

[36]Lind to State Department, March 22, 23, 1914/11237, 11248. Before O'Shaughnessy went to Vera Cruz, the New York Times reported that he was bed-ridden with his illness. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy noted in a letter that the doctor recommended that her husband go to the coast. See New York Times, March 20, 1914, p. 1; O'Shaughnessy, A Diplomat's Wife in Mexico, 229.

enmity became to pronounced that reporters noticed the strained relations between the two diplomats. O'Shaughnessy, still in pain, was so distressed by the agent's attitude that he returned to Mexico City after only two days' convalescence. The day of his departure, Lind recommended to Washington that the charge' be recalled immediately.[37]

But Wilson did not recall O'Shaughnessy, nor did he give any indication that, in the near future, he would adopt a more vigorous policy. By the end of March, with Villa's victory at Torreón yet to be accomplished, Lind was certain that the civil war in Mexico had reached a stalemate. Certain, also, that his pleas for intervention had been ignored in Washington, he became openly critical, almost condemnatory of the Administration's failure to accept more responsibility for ending the strife. "It seems to me," he wrote to Bryan, "that the time has passed for being overly scrupulous. . . ."[38] Believing that further efforts to move the President would be useless, he asked for and received permission to return to the United

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[37]Lind to Bryan (personal), March 23, 1914/27482; New York Times, March 23, 1914, p. 1; ibid., March 24, 1914, p. 2. James Cardinal Gibbons was a severe critic of the anti-clerical Mexican revolutionaries; hence, of the Wilson Administration's Mexican policy as well. See Arthur S. Link, Wilson: The Struggle For Neutrality, 1914-1915 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), 468.

[38]Lind to State Department, March 27, 1914/11313.

States. On April 3, he departed for New York aboard one of the presidential yachts, the Mayflower.[39] As he sailed, he had no reason to suspect that he still had a critical role to play in the contest between Wilson and Huerta.

As Lind prepared to depart from Vera Cruz, Carranza directed General Pablo González, Commander of the Army Corps of the Northeast, to commence the attack against the oil-rich Tampico region held by the Federal forces. On April 9, two days after the battle for the port city began, a whaleboat from the American gunboat Dolphin put ashore to procure gasoline. The crew, because they landed in a combat zone, were arrested by Federal soldiers. The sailors were soon released by the commander, General Ignacio Morelos Zaragoza, who immediately sent his regrets to Admiral Henry T. Mayo aboard the Dolphin. Admiral Mayo, however, was not satisfied. Knowing of Wilson's attitude toward Huerta, he felt that he would be expected to uphold American prestige to the utmost. Mayo, therefore, demanded a twenty-one gun salute to the American flag within twenty-four hours. When Wilson was notified of the incident, he commented: "Mayo could not have done otherwise."[40]

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[39]Lind to State Department, March 29, 1914, and State Department to Lind, March 31, 1914/11327; New York Times, April 3, 1914, p. 2.

[40]Robert E. Quirk, An Affair of Honor (Louisville: University of Kentucky Press, 1962), 1-32; Ted C. Hinckley, "Wilson, Huerta and the Twenty-one Gun Salute," The Historian, XXII (February, 1960), 201-202.

Lind's arrival in Washington, on April 13, came precisely at the time when Wilson needed moral support. The day before, Huerta refused to fire the salute, claiming that to do so would be to offend Mexico's national dignity. On April 14, before the President met with his cabinet to discuss possible punitive measures, he had a conference with Lind. If Wilson needed any assurance that forceful action was needed, he surely received it from his special agent.[41] Although there is no record of what Lind said, the British Ambassador reported that he used "very violent language."[42] He probably insisted that the ports of Tampico and Vera Cruz be seized. Even more important, as salve for Wilson's sense of humanity, Lind probably suggested, as he had in his despatches, that the people of those cities so despised Huerta's exhorbitant taxes and military impressment that they would not offer much resistance and might even welcome the invasion.[43] Later

[41] Quirk, Affair of Honor, 49-50; Stephenson, Lind, 263.

[42] British Ambassador quoted in Grieb, United States and Huerta, 147.

[43] Lind to State Department, February 4, March 12, 23, 1914/10965, 11227, 27482. Under oath before the Fall Committee in 1920, Lind denied ever having suggested the taking of Vera Cruz or Tampico, either in his despatches or verbally. He also denied having claimed that American troops might be welcomed in Vera Cruz. See testimony of Lind, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 2363. Lind's biographer, George M. Stephenson, accepts this testimony. See Lind, 264. Yet, the above cited despatches reveal that he did make such claims.

that same day, Wilson ordered the Atlantic fleet to Mexican waters.[44]

The entire situation was soon blown entirely out of proportion. Huerta agreed to the salute, but only if Admiral Mayo responded with a shot-for-shot salute to the Mexican flag. Rejecting this solution, Wilson went before Congress on April 20 to secure its approval for the use of armed force to induce Huerta to recognize "the rights and dignity of the United States."[45] That evening, Lind, along with Secretaries Bryan, Daniels, and Baker, and the chiefs of staff of the army and navy, met with Wilson at the White House to detail plans for a possible naval blockade and invasion of Tampico and Vera Cruz.[46] Familiar with both ports and the surrounding military installations, and having already given considerable thought to possible military operations in Mexico, Lind doubtless contributed his views to this counsel of war.

Before Congress could act on Wilson's request, completely different circumstances prompted him to take immediate action. On April 20, the day Wilson addressed Congress, Consul Canada at Vera Cruz reported that the

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[44]Quirk, Affair of Honor, 50-68; Hinckley, "Wilson, Huerta and the Twenty-one Gun Salute," The Historian, XXII 203-205.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Stephenson, Lind, 263-64; Baker, Woodrow Wilson, IV, 328-29.

German freighter Ypiranga, laden with arms and ammunition for Huerta, was due to arrive the next day and discharge its deadly cargo. The arms of the Ypiranga completely distracted the President from his point of honor. He had recently been informed that those arms had been purchased for Huerta in the United States under the very noses of Treasury Department agents and, in an attempt to conceal their destination, had been shipped to Mexico by way of Odessa, Russia, and Hamburg, Germany. Angered by Huerta's attempted trickery, Wilson used the Ypiranga's arrival at Vera Cruz as a pretext to do what Lind had been advising for months. In the early morning hours of April 21, without Congressional sanction, he ordered Admiral Fletcher to seize the Vera Cruz customs house.[47] Since he was only attempting to thwart Huerta and meant the Mexican people no harm, Wilson, accepting Lind's counsels, anticipated little or no resistance. But Huerta's garrison at Vera Cruz did resist and the fighting cost Mexico over 200 lives, the United States only nineteen. The day following the invasion, Congress gave its consent for the President to uphold the nation's honor by force, to what was now a sham

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[47] Meyer, "Arms of the Ypiranga," HAHR, L (August, 1970), 546-56. Further proof that Wilson was merely looking for a pretext to intervene is provided by the fact that the Ypiranga was allowed to discharge its cargo at Puerto México, some 200 miles south of Vera Cruz.

fait accompli.[48]

A side light of the Vera Cruz incident was the formal disgrace of Nelson O'Shaughnessy. After his return to the United States, Lind continued to criticize the charge' and urge his recall. Huerta, not Wilson, ultimately performed this service when, after the Marines landed in Vera Cruz, he handed the charge' his passports. His relations with Huerta friendly to the end, O'Shaughnessy returned to the United States to face Wilson's scorn. After being thoroughly chastized, he was shipped off to a minor secretaryship in the Embassy at Vienna. Never again given a post commensurate with his abilities or experience, after a brief stint in Austria he was dropped from the diplomatic service.[49] Lind doubtless applauded, if he did not even encourage, the abasement of the former charge'.

Wilson was shaken and horrified by the unexpected spilling of blood in Vera Cruz. His plans for a large-scale invasion of Mexico to give Huerta the coup de grace were abandoned when, on April 25, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile offered to mediate the conflict and Wilson accepted. A number of factors besides the President's natural revulsion to death and violence prompted this decision.

[48]Quirk, Affair of Honor, 78-103; Hinckley, "Wilson, Huerta, and the Twenty-one Gun Salute," The Historian, XXII, 205-206.

[49]Quirk, Affair of Honor, 109; New York Times, April 16, 1914, p. 2; ibid., September 9, 1914, p. 9; ibid., June 15, August 27, 1915, p. 5; Mexican Herald, May 1, 16, 1914.

American and world opinion had been shocked and outraged by the aggression in Vera Cruz. Having explained that his sole purpose was to uphold national honor, Wilson could see that by continuing military operations until Huerta was eliminated he would run further afoul of public opinion. By using the ABC mediators as his pawns, he hoped not only to eliminate Huerta at the negotiating table but, at the same time, to allay Latin American suspicions of Yankee imperialism. Huerta, now cut off from his main sources of revenue, was also willing to mediate.[50]

Another development that caused Wilson to stop short of a full-scale invasion was the violent reaction of Venustiano Carranza. After the Dolphin incident at Tampico, and during the diplomatic impasse that followed, the State Department paid little attention to what the Constitutionalists' attitude might be. The War Department, however, did alert its garrisons on the Mexican border and sent Brigadier General John J. Pershing to Fort Bliss at El Paso.[51] On the day Marines landed in Vera Cruz, Huerta forced Wilson to concern himself with the attitude of the rebels when he issued an amnesty decree and invited them to join with him in defending Mexico's sovereignty.

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[50]Quirk, Affair of Honor, 114-20; Link, New Freedom, 401-407.

[51]Paul S. Horgan, Great River: The Rio Grande in North American History (2 vols., New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc., 1954), II, 916.

Before the fighting in Vera Cruz ended, therefore, the President directed Bryan to have Carothers inform Carranza that the actions of the United States should not be construed as war against the Mexican people but as merely—and here he was not entirely truthful—an attempt to force Huerta "to make proper reparation for the arrest of the American sailors."[52]

On the morning of April 22, Carothers, from El Paso, telegraphed Wilson's message to Carranza in Chihuahua.[53] The First Chief's reply, which reached the special agent later that day, bristled with anger. In characteristic fashion, Carranza declared that since Huerta was a usurper, he had no constitutional power to accept demands for redress of grievances or make reparations to any foreign government. The Constitution of Mexico, he continued, clearly stated that the acts of a usurper, whether they be domestic or international in nature, were punishable by the constitutional authorities of Mexico, and no one else. He concluded his reply with an open threat of war:

> . . . the invasion of our territory and the stay of your forces in the port of Vera Cruz, violating the rights that constitute our existence

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[52]State Department to Carothers, April 21, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 480.

[53]Carothers to State Department, April 22, 1914/11596; El Paso Morning Times, April 23, 1914.

> as a free and independent sovereign entity, may indeed drag us into an unequal war . . . which until today we have desired to avoid.[54]

The prospect of war electrified the city of El Paso. Even before receiving Carranza's reply, Carothers detected "a very strong undercurrent of resentment" among the Constitutionalist authorities in Juárez. Tension mounted when rumors reached El Paso that Constitutionalist and American troops had already clashed further down the Rio Grande at Ojinaga. Then came news that Villa was on his way to the border with 12,000 troops and a trainload of artillery. Every hardware store sold out of firearms and ammunition within hours of the first rumors. Every train leaving El Paso, to the east, west, and north, was loaded to capacity. General Pershing placed his troops at the international bridge and all possible fords near the city. Reinforcements were sent speeding from Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio and from Fort Hauchuca in southeast Arizona.[55] Tension also mounted in Washington. Bryan

[54]Carothers (containing Carranza's reply) to State Department, April 22, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 483-84. This document is probably a State Department translation of Carranza's telegraphic message to Carothers, the original of which was sent to Washington by mail after Carothers telegraphed his own translation. The original must have been cited in Foreign Relations, because it differs slightly from Carothers' translation. See Carothers to State Department, April 22, 1914/11618; copy in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 51.

[55]Carothers to State Department, April 21, 22, 1914/11587, 11596; General Tasker Bliss to War Department, April 23, 1914 (three), Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 106; El Paso Morning Times, April 23, 1914.

issued instructions for all consuls in Mexico to encourage Americans to leave as soon as possible, and Wilson promptly reimposed the arms embargo.[56]

When Villa arrived in Juárez, Carothers immediately crossed the river to determine what the Mexicans' intentions were. Villa greeted him cordially with the traditional Mexican abrazo for all the reporters to see and exclaimed aloud that "there would be no war between the United States and the Constitutionalists." To emphasize his friendship for the United States, he proclaimed that the Marines "could keep Vera Cruz and hold it so tight that not even water could get in to Huerta." Carothers noted that Villa also professed that "no drunkard, meaning Huerta, was going to draw him into a war with his friends." He insisted that he had come to the border to restore confidence between himself and the United States. Then he asked Carothers to dine with him.[57] So as to ease the tension in El Paso, Carothers first telephoned Zach Cobb, the Customs Collector, and asked him to inform authorities that Villa was not belligerent and that all was well. That

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[56]State Department to All American Consuls in Mexico, April 22, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 671; New York Times, April 24, 1914, p. 1.

[57]Carothers to State Department, April 23, 1914/11654; New York Times, April 24, 1914, p. 1; El Paso Morning Times, April 24, 1914; "Our Debt to Villa," Literary Digest, XLVIII (May 16, 1914), 1166; Guzmán, Memoirs of Pancho Villa, 190-91.

night, Carothers was a hero in El Paso.[58]

Villa, alone, among the Constitutionalist generals took a peaceful stance following the Vera Cruz invasion. Indeed, the others had encouraged Carranza to make his bellicose pronouncement.[59] Villa, in his conversations with Carothers, claimed that he had openly disagreed with Carranza's advisors and had hastened to disassociate himself from them by coming to the border to make his own views known.[60] He may, as he claimed, have realized that a perpetual arms embargo, which would result from the rebels taking a hard line against the United States, would stall the war against Huerta. On the other hand, he may simply have realized how valuable Wilson's good will might be in the future. At any rate, Carothers was confident of Villa's sincerity. Bryan was ecstatic. Referring to the independent stand, he urged Carothers to inform Villa that "it shows a largeness of view on his part and a comprehension of the whole situation which is greatly to his credit." Bryan also directed his agent to reveal that "public opinion in the United States has been greatly

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[58]Cobb to State Department, April 23, 1914/11656; Raymond G. Carroll, "United States Agents Powerful in Mexico," New York Sun, August 15, 1915.

[59]Letcher to State Department, April 22, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 484; Barragán, "From the Memoirs of Don Venustiano Carranza," El Universal, June 22, 1931, NA, RG 76/148.

[60]Carothers to State Department, April 23, 1914/11654; Guzmán, Memoirs of Pancho Villa, 190-91.

disturbed by General Carranza's attitude. . . ."[61] If this was an invitation for Villa to challenge Carranza's obdurate stand, it was not long in being accepted.

On April 25, Villa, through Carothers, sent a personal letter to President Wilson, in which he reiterated what he had told the special agent two days before. He also openly disavowed Carranza's stand and rather apologetically assured the American President that he could disregard the First Chief's warlike tones, that they were just his means of defending the dignity of the Republic.[62] Villa also told Carothers confidentially that he would force Carranza to change his attitude. In a letter to General Scott, Carothers stated his firm conviction that "if Carranza is not careful, Villa will overthrow him."[63] When, shortly thereafter, Villa returned to Chihuahua and Carranza's attitude began to soften, Carothers and the American press naturally assumed that Villa had forced his hand.[64]

The possibility of his forces splitting was, no doubt,

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[61] State Department to Carothers, April 24, 1914/11654.

[62] Villa to Wilson, April 25, 1914/11714; copy in Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 51.

[63] Carothers to State Department, April 25, 1914/11704; Carothers to Scott, April 25, 1914, Scott Papers, Box 15.

[64] Carothers to State Department, April 27, 29, 1914/11731, 11770; "Our Debt to Villa," Literary Digest, XLVIII, 1166-67.

a sobering thought and helped persuade Carranza to modify his stand. Actually, he had already notified Washington through Consul Letcher that he wished to avoid armed conflict.[65] Carothers also received word that some of the other Constitutionalist generals had waivered and were now urging moderation.[66] Carranza, moreover, began receiving messages from one of his Anglo-American agents in the United States, Sherbourne G. Hopkins, who advised that American public opinion was greatly inflamed by the First Chief's recent warlike pronouncement. Hopkins counseled that, when the time seemed opportune, Carranza should issue a statement to the effect that, since the United States had occupied only Vera Cruz, the Constitutionalists were satisfied that Mexican sovereignty would be respected. On May 4, after Wilson had accepted the ABC mediation, Carranza's agent in Washington, Rafael Zubarán Capmany, addressed a note to Bryan which embodied the suggestions that Hopkins had made.[67]

During the last days of April and the first weeks of

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[65] Letcher to State Department, April 22, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 484.

[66] Carothers to State Department, April 25, 1914/11704; copy in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 51.

[67] S. Gil Herrera (Hopkins) a Carranza, April 23, 1914, AGRE, L-E-861, Leg. 5; Hopkins to Carranza, April 24, 1914, copy in Scott Papers, Box 15; Zubaran Capmany to State Department, Foreign Relations, 1914, 496-97.

May, preparations went on for the ABC mediation. Both Wilson and Huerta chose noteworthy delegates to meet with the mediators at Niagara Falls, Ontario. The mediators at first assumed that the only matter under consideration was the settling of the conflict between the United States and the Huerta government. But before the deliberations got underway on May 20, Wilson made it clear that he intended for the conferees to arrange for the elimination of Huerta and the establishment of a new provisional government which he could recognize. Since the American President insisted upon delving into the internal affairs of Mexico, the mediators extended an invitation to the Constitutionalists to send delegates, and Carranza accepted the offer in "principle."

The mediators labored manfully under numerous handicaps. When, in attempting to promote general peace between all the conferring parties, they urged Carranza to declare an armistice before entering into the negotiations, the First Chief refused. Under pressure from Wilson, he did agree to send delegates but the ABC mediators refused to accept them, declaring that their presence would be counter to the spirit of a peace conference. All the conferees and Wilson, meanwhile, were at loggerheads over the composition of a provisional government. To top off the madcap situation, Carranza and his agents repeatedly declared that the Constitutionalists would not admit the right of the

mediators to interfere with the progress of their revolution, nor would they allow Wilson to help in establishing a new provisional government. In anyone entered the negotiations with a spirit of compromise, it was Huerta. Wilson, of course, had no intention of compromising with the usurper.[68]

On July 1, the conferees signed several protocols. It was agreed that the composition of the provisional government would be determined by the warring factions in Mexico and that the United States would recognize it. The provisional government was to grant amnesty and compensate foreigners for their losses during the civil war. The United States agreed that it would not demand reparation for the Tampico incident, thus disposing of Wilson's absurd point of honor. The conferees also invited Carranza to enter into direct negotiations with Huerta for the creation of a new provisional government. On July 2, after Carranza stood on his Plan of Guadalupe and declared that he would continue fighting until all vestiges of the usurper's regime was destroyed, the conference adjourned.[69] The ABC mediation, therfore, accomplished little except an indefinite suspension of hostilities between the United States and the Huerta government. Carranza's refusal to

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[68]Link, New Freedom, 405-13; Grieb, United States and Huerta, 159-77.

[69]Ibid.

accept a negotiated peace once more thwarted Wilson's plans for guiding the reconstruction of Mexico.

Government and public opinion in the United States, disturbed by Carranza's initial response to the Vera Cruz landings, was little assuaged by his attitude toward the mediation. For this, John Lind was partially responsible. Paradoxically, the special agent's sympathies were with the Carrancistas. Having established contacts with Carranza's agents in the United States—Zubarán Capmany, Cabrera, and Juan F. Urquidi—during and after the Vera Cruz incident, he found them well-educated and as thoroughly middle-class as he. As a result, his earlier stated fears of their possible revolutionary excesses evaporated. His suspicions of more radical revolutionaries, such as Villa, whom he had earlier boosted, and Zapata, never disappeared. Little time passed, however, before he accepted the Carrancistas' goals for Mexico as his own. His trust in them was such that he no longer saw a need for the United States to intervene and aid in the reconstruction of Mexico. Equally significant, the Carrancistas considered him their most trustworthy and sympathetic friend in the United States. Although their press comments were often anti-American, they periodically reminded the Mexican people that John Lind was their closest American friend.[70]

[70]Stephenson, Lind, 266-69, 274; Fabela, Historia Diplomática de la Revolución Mexicana, I, 367-71; Lind to Bryan, April 16, 1915, Bryan Papers, Box 43; Lind to Bryan,

Lind played a curious dual role during the ABC proceedings. Wilson retained him in Washington as an advisor to the Secretary of State and the American delegation at the Niagara Falls Conference. As the conference progressed, however, he increasingly advised the Carrancistas, and, more and more, his ideas coincided with theirs. Even before the negotiations began, in a memorandum to the President, he prophesied the results:

> I am fully convinced . . . that the mediation will result in nothing. Its greatest value, so far as the Mexican situation is concerned, is in the fact that it has afforded the Americans an opportunity to escape.[71]

Lind was disturbed when he discovered that Wilson hoped to promote a new provisional government in Mexico. "The Mexicans of the north are, as you already appreciate, very sensitive about doing anything that smacks of taking orders from outside," he wrote to Bryan. Insisting that a military victory by the rebels was the only solution, he noted further that:

April 21, 1915, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 129; Lind to Wilson August 2, 1915, ibid., Series IV, 125; Zubarán Capmany a Carranza, June 19, 1914, Isidro Fabela (ed.), Documentos Historicos de la Revolución Mexicana, Vol. III: Carranza, Wilson y el ABC (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1962), 127-28; Churabusco (Mexico City), May 11, 1914; El Pueblo (Mexico City), March 21, 27, 1915. Lind's suspicions of Villa and Zapata resulted partly from Carrancista propaganda, which branded them as dangerous self-seekers.

[71]Lind, Memorandum, April 30, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 108.

> . . . the problem we have to deal with is a victorious army with a score of politically inexperienced but ambitious chiefs—every one including Zapata a potential candidate for the dictatorship.

"The only safe course for us in the mediation proceedings," he concluded, "is to remain as listeners."[72]

Before the mediation conferences had proceeded far, Lind found himself in almost total disagreement with Wilson and Bryan. He spent more and more time in consultation with the Constitutionalist junta.[73] In fact, when Carranza declared that the Constitutionalists would not recognize the right of the mediators to involve themselves in Mexico's internal affairs, Lind helped draft the statement.[74] Almost simultaneously he sent Bryan a cautiously worded protest against the Administration's

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[72] Lind to Bryan, [n.d.], ibid.

[73] New York Times, May 27, 28, 1914, p. 1; ibid., June 10, 1914, p. 2; Mexican Herald, May 31, 1914; New York Sun, July 18, 1914.

[74] Draft of memorandum with notations to the effect that Lind helped prepare it, [n.d.], Lind Papers, Box 3. Portions of this draft are identical to Zubarán Capmany a los plenipotenciarios del ABC, May 27, 1914, Carranza, Wilson y el ABC, 43-44. See also Zubarán Capmany, representing General Carranza, to the Mediators, May 28, 1914, enclosure no. 8 of The Special Commissioners to State Department, May 31, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 519. The different dates assigned to Zubarán Capmany's note by the above cited publications results from the fact that the first citation represents the date when Zubarán Capmany sent the note to Juan F. Urquidi with instructions for him to present it to the mediators, while the second citation represents the actual date that the mediators received the document.

continued attempts to create a new provisional government through mediation, since, according to the Mexican Constitution, Huerta, a usurper, could not legally be a party to arranging his successor. "We should not worry about the succession," he counseled. "That will take care of itself."[75]

That there was no open break between Lind and the Administration was owing to the fact that the Administration's policy, despite the fact that Carranza refused to accept it, was designed to aid the revolutionists. To the casual observer, therefore, Lind and Wilson seemed to be in basic agreement. Indeed, the Huerta delegation at Niagara Falls assumed that Wilson's policy resulted largely from Lind's counsels.[76] Wilson no more than Lind was willing to support the mediators' demand for a Constitutionalist cease fire. Wilson, moreover, conveniently turned his back while the rebels procured arms in the United States in violation of the embargo and shippped them to Tampico, which had been captured by the Constitutionalists on May 13. When Huerta's delegates protested to the mediators, Wilson apologized, claiming ignorance of the illicit arms trade, but Lind made no excuses. Instead, he informed Sherbourne Hopkins, who was purchasing arms for the rebels, that the arms traffic would attract less unfavorable attention if

[75]Lind to Bryan, May 29, 1914, Bryan Papers, Box 30.

[76]New York Times, July 3, 1914, p. 3.

the illicit cargoes were first shipped to Havana, where new ship's papers could be secured, then delivered to Tampico.[77] Despite their common sympathy for the Constitutionalists, Wilson never endorsed Carranza as enthusiastically as did Lind.

Although his services were not officially terminated until August—probably to enable him to draw a full year's salary—Lind returned to Minnesota in early June. He continued to communicate with Wilson and Bryan on Mexican affairs. His advices were virtually ignored for the remainder of 1914 and most of 1915, because the Administration tended to favor Villa and Zapata over Carranza during that time. Lind's steadfast support of the First Chief ultimately drew charges from the anti-Administration New York Sun, to the effect that he was a paid agent of the Carrancista faction. He denied ever receiving money or any other compensation from Carranza, and there is little reason to doubt his word. He was such an unabashed supporter of the First Chief that, once he left the employ of the Wilson Administration, he would have seen nothing

[77] Grieb, United States and Huerta, 172-75; Buckley, conversation with Sherbourne Hopkins, October 4, 1919, Buckley Papers, File no. 233; Testimony of Sherbourne G. Hopkins, April 29, 1920, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 2412-14; New York Times, July 10, 1914, p. 2. For details of the taking of Tampico, see Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, I, 471-75; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 27-28.

unethical about receiving compensation from the revolutionaries.[78]

During World War I, Lind again served the Wilson Administration, first as a Commissioner of Conciliation in the Department of Labor, then as an umpire for the National War Labor Board. As did so many reformers of the Progressive Era, he also served on his state's Commission on Public Safety, which was dedicated to promoting patriotism, ferreting out supposedly dangerous aliens, and suppressing would-be opponents of the war effort. In this capacity, he was largely responsible for the suppression of the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World in Minnesota. In 1917, at his suggestions, the Department of Justice secured convictions against the Minnesota leaders of the I.W.W. on criminal conspiracy charges. Following techniques suggested by Lind, the Justice Department broke the power of the I.W.W. elsewhere in the Midwest, as the local union leaders were successively convicted on conspiracy charges. Despite his role in the repression of the I.W.W., Lind refused to support a move to oust the socialist mayor of Minneapolis, Thomas Van Lear.[79]

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[78]Stephenson, Lind, 284-305; New York Times, June 10, 12, 1914, p. 2; New York Sun, July 16, 1914, November 5, 1915; Testimony of Lind and Buckley, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 812, 2364.

[79]Stephenson, Lind, 332-33; William Preston, Jr., Aliens and Dissenters: Federal Suppression of Radicals, 1903-1933 (New York: Harper and Row, Pub., 1966), 99, 126-28.

In his old age Lind remained true to his midwestern progressive heritage. He supported the Conference for Progressive Political Action and its candidates, Robert La Follette and Burton K. Wheeler, in the presidential campaign of 1924. But in 1928, he refused to endorse Al Smith because of the New Yorker's affiliation with Tammany Hall. On September 18, 1930, he died at his home in Minneapolis.[80] Certainly he had been the most publicized and controversial and, at times, the most influential of Wilson's special agents in Mexico.

All of Lind's diplomatic efforts in Mexico had met with failure. Indeed, his protracted stay may have served to harden Huerta's will to remain in power. But as a gatherer of information and as a propagandist, he was much more successful. Even before his departure, his promptings had influenced the President to establish permanent contacts with the Constitutionalists and to lift the arms embargo. The military intervention he so often pleaded for doubtless resulted, in part, from his counsels.

He left Mexico believing that his efforts had gone for naught. But Wilson must have been pleased with his overall performance. Lind had pursued his task with the zeal of a progressive reformer, and the principles he strove to uphold mirrored Wilson's own New Freedom. In the Minnesotan's mind, Mexico contained all the same

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[80]Stephenson, Lind, 342-66.

evils he had sought to eradicate in the United States during his political career: a corrupt political regime (in this case, Huerta's provisional government) sustained by a privileged group of business interests (in this case, hacendados and British concessionaires) who did not have the public interest at heart. He had a progressive's faith that such malignant political and economic conditions could be eliminated by an enlightened elite (in this case, the Constitutionalists of the North) working through democratic institutions. Since free elections, the traditional Anglo-American technique of eliminating such evils, seemed temporarily unworkable in Mexico, Lind accepted as axiomatic the assumption that intervention by the United States would advance Mexico toward the establishment of a progressive capitalist democracy.[81] Only after he returned to the United States did he realize that the price of such advancement—control of the Mexican Revolution by the United States—was greater than the revolutionary leaders, at least, Carranza, were willing to pay. In the process, he learned something that had escaped his president—that the Mexicans were capable of solving their own problems.

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[81]Larry D. Hill, "The Progressive Politician as a Diplomat: The Case of John Lind in Mexico," The Americas, XXVII (April, 1971), 372.

WOODROW WILSON'S EXECUTIVE AGENTS IN MEXICO: FROM THE BEGINNING OF HIS ADMINISTRATION TO THE RECOGNITION OF VENUSTIANO CARRANZA

VOLUME II

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by
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CHAPTER VIII

HOLDING THE LID ON

Wilson's disappointment at his failure to influence Carranza through the ABC powers was assuaged somewhat by the more encouraging results of George Carothers' efforts. By May, 1914, he was a familiar figure in all the Constitutionalist camps east of Sonora. His work by this time was drawing a great deal of praise. After the border crisis, which followed the Vera Cruz invasion, subsided, General Pershing, in his report to General Tasker H. Bliss, noted: "Carothers has so far succeeded in directing the Constitutionalists along rational lines."[1] British Consul Cunard Cummings was even more complimentary in a letter to Zach Cobb, which he asked to be forwarded to Carothers's superiors:

> On several occasions I accompanied Mr. Carothers on visits to Constitutionalist leaders, and invariably found genuine pleasure how matters calling for the most delicate handling have been with rare tactfulness carried to successful issue, how misunderstandings have been corrected, wrong impressions removed, rashness and violence curbed, and how Mr. Carothers has with masterful diplomacy, assisted by his thorough knowledge of the language

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[1]Pershing to Bliss, June 2, 1914, John J. Pershing Papers, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress, Box 372.

> and character of the Mexican people, exercised a strong controlling influence over his listeners, impressing them with his kindness, frankness and the justice of sound reasoning, exhibiting at all times the attitude of strong determination, thus often bringing about abandonment of intentions, which if perservered with, must have produced dangerous complications.[2]

Zach Cobb himself offered even more encouragement for the future. In a letter to General Scott, he wrote: "I see a splendid possibility, through the diplomatic work of Carothers, to get the Constitutionalists to agree to the President's program as it develops."[3]

In his relations with Carranza, the State Department agent continued to enjoy only mixed success. His efforts to protect American oil interests at Tampico, for example, pointed up again the difficulty in securing a completely satisfactory agreement from the First Chief. Fearing reprisals from the Federal armies, most Americans had fled Tampico following the Vera Cruz invasion. Other foreigners fled the area because of the fighting between the Constitutionalists and the Federals. With millions of dollars worth of oil properties left to the caprice of the contesting forces, Bryan instructed Carothers to attempt to persuade Carranza to arrange with the Federals to neutralize the oil producing areas. In his own inimitable way, Carranza replied that the Constitutionalists had not

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[2]Cunard Cummings to Cobb, April 30, 1914, NA 125.36582/85.

[3]Cobb to Scott, May 2, 1914, Scott Papers, Box 15.

driven the foreign oil field workers from their jobs and that neutralization of the oil fields was not necessary, since his troops controlled the area and would insure the protection of foreigners and their interests. This arrangement was not precisely what Washington had requested but it was acceptable to the oil men. Several minor irritants resulted from the Constitutionalists' occupation of Tampico, but by the end of May most of the oil workers were back on the job and, at least temporarily, the oil companies had little with which to quarrel.[4]

Carothers' relations with Villa provided the Administration with its greatest source of encouragement. Officially their relationship remained the same; Carothers' primary responsibility, at least until July, 1914, was to protect the interests of foreigners. But privately the two became fast friends. Villa provided Carothers with a private rail car—actually a converted boxcar, with sleeping and kitchen facilities. Carothers was also provided with two Chinese servants, one of whom, the agent claimed, could cook as well as the best New York chef.[5] Villa and

[4]State Department to Carothers, April 28, May 8, 14, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 690-91, 700, 702; Carothers to State Department, May 1, 20, 1914, ibid., 695, 700; State Department to Clarence Miller, American Consul, Tampico, May 6, 14, 15, 1914, ibid., 697, 701-702; Miller to State Department, May 8 (two), 14, 15, 17, 21, 1914, ibid., 698-99, 702-704.

[5]Edward L. Tinker, "Campaigning With Villa," Southwest Review, XXX (Winter, 1945), 150-52. Tinker was a journalist who traveled with Carothers in the private car during one of Villa's campaigns.

Carothers spent many hours discussing the nature of the revolution and America's response to it. In this respect, the friendship served Villa better than the United States, because he was always aware of what behavior would have the most favorable impact north of the border.

Wilson and Bryan were definitely pleased by the favorable impression of Villa that was emerging in the American press. In a popular parlance of the day, he had become the "Mexican man of the hour."[6] During the early months of 1914, before the outbreak of war in Europe, Villa received tremendous press coverage. He provided newspaper and magazine correspondents with a railroad car of their own. At least a dozen reporters were with him most of the time, and he readily made himself available for interviews.[7] For the most part, these correspondents wrote glowing accounts of Villa's exploits and character. The reporter from The World's Work claimed that if the United States wanted something "put through," Villa was

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[6]Gregory Mason, "The Mexican Man of the Hour," Outlook, CVII (June 6, 1914), 292.

[7]Herman Whitaker, "Villa-Bandit-Patriot," Independent, LXXVII (June 8, 1914), 450-51. For an analysis of Villa's relations with the press and the myths that resulted, see Nancy Brandt, "Pancho Villa: The Making of a Modern Legend," The Americas, XXI (October, 1964), 146-62.

the man to deal with.[8] For the first time, it appeared to another writer, the revolution had developed "a strong man of its own."[9] Probably the correspondent most enamored with Villa was John Reed of the New York World. His romanticized accounts pictured the rebel chieftain as combining the best qualities of Robin Hood and Napoleon. By Reed's account, Villa was vindicating Wilson's Mexican policy.[10]

Reed, in fact, was so impressed by Villa that, when he returned to the United States, he contacted Wilson's secretary, Joseph P. Tumulty, and asked for an opportunity to pass on some of his impressions directly to the President. Instead of the President, Assistant Secretary of State William Phillips met with Reed on April 24, the approximate time of Villa's displays of friendship following the Vera Cruz landings. Reed painted Villa as having no political ambitions. His passion was to help his fellow Mexicans. Carranza, on the other hand, Reed pictured as an aristocrat, who looked upon his peon

[8]Joseph Taylor Rogers, "Pancho Villa at First Hand," The World's Work, XXVIII (July, 1914), 265.

[9]"Northern Mexico Lost to Huerta," Literary Digest, XLVIII (January 24, 1914), 144.

[10]Reed quoted in "The Rise of Villa's Star," ibid. (April 18, 1914), 889. Reed incorporated his newspaper and magazine accounts into the previously cited book, Insurgent Mexico.

followers as a subject race.[11] Some time later, Wilson did grant Reed an interview and gave the journalist permission to use their conversation as the subject of an article.[12]

All the correspondents were not as impressed with Villa as was Reed. Even the most hostile commentators admitted, nonetheless, that while Villa's professions of friendship for the United States might have been for selfish reasons, he had saved Wilson from an embarrassing situation. Congressman William Kent of California probably expressed the majority opinion when he proclaimed that "now, between us and a general war there seems to be but one thing, and that is the fact that there is one man down there, one strong man, Villa. . . ."[13]

An editorial in the New York World probably came closest to expressing Wilson's own view: "We have many remarkable proofs of this man's (Villa) capacity for leadership but not one of them has been more conclusive than his willingness to be advised and assisted by the

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[11] Reed to Tumulty, April 8, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 121; Phillips to Bryan, April 24, 1914/24262.

[12] Wilson to Reed, June 17, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 111; Tumulty, Memorandum, June 22, 1914, ibid. In this memorandum to the President, Tumulty reports that there are certain items in the draft of Reed's article that might prove embarrassing to the Administration. He was certain that the President would want them eliminated before it was published.

[13] Cong. Rec., 63 Cong., 2 Sess. (April 27, 1914), 7339; New York Times, April 28, 1914, p. 3.

United States."[14] Certainly Villa, among the Constitutionalist leaders, seemed most willing to accept American guidance. There seemed little hope of securing it through Carranza. The State Department had chosen Carothers because of his ability to influence Villa; the decision had already paid dividends. In President Wilson's own words, "General Villa . . . often shows some susceptibilities of the best influences."[15]

The Vera Cruz intervention gave Villa an opportunity to exhibit his friendliness for the United States, but it also openly revealed, for the first time, that he and Carranza did not see eye to eye. The first days of May, 1914, found Villa in Torreón preparing for an assault on Zacatecas, the one remaining Federal stronghold between him and Mexico City. Determined to beat all other Constitutionalist armies to the capital, Villa planned his campaign without consulting Carranza; but the First Chief would not be ignored. He and his advisors decided that it was time to curb their impetuous colleague. Rather than allow Villa to march rapidly southward, Carranza ordered him to the East to capture Saltillo, a mission which logically should have been assigned to General Pablo González, commander of the Army Corps of the Northeast.

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[14] New York World, June 20, 1914.

[15] Wilson to Scott, April 16, 1914, Scott Papers, Box 15.

At first Villa refused to be sidetracked, but after a heated argument with the First Chief, he agreed to the Saltillo campaign. Villa having capitulated, Carranza hoped that he had bought enough time to allow General Obregón to strike across the mountains of Tepíc and Jalisco, through Guadalajara, and arrive in Mexico City before Villa.

As Villa marched on Saltillo, Carranza hastened to Durango to see General Pánfilo Natera, the revolutionary chief of the state of Zacatecas. In another move designed to thwart Villa, the First Chief entrusted Natera with the task of capturing the important city of Zacatecas. But Natera was unequal to the task. For three days his armies hammered at the Federal implacements but were repulsed each time with heavy casualties. Villa, meanwhile, routed the Federal garrison at Paredón, leaving the approaches to Saltillo clear of opposing forces. Shortly thereafter the Huertistas evacuated Saltillo without a fight and Villa occupied the city on May 21. Villa might then have struck southward, following the retreating Federals toward San Luis Potosí, but he did not trust General González, who, sitting in nearby Monterrey, could menace his lines of communications out of Chihuahua. In the first days of June, therefore, Villa turned Saltillo over to González and

returned to the more cordial surroundings of Torreón.[16]

Shortly after Villa's return to Torreón, Carothers journeyed to El Paso to file a lengthy report on the Saltillo campaign. While he was at the border, relations between Villa and Carranza reached a breaking point. Consul Letcher reported from Chihuahua that he had received information from Carrancista officials that the First Chief had arranged to deny the Division of the North ammunition and supplies and was determined to limit Villa's authority to the state of Chihuahua.[17] Carothers, puzzled by similar reports that appeared in the El Paso newspapers, reported his own belief that there was "no serious trouble between Carranza and Villa."[18] He was shocked, therefore, when he returned to Torreón and discovered that relations between the two revolutionary chiefs had, indeed, deteriorated during his absence from Villa's side.

Villa was in a rage. The First Chief, he charged, was attempting to curtail the operations of the Division of the North by censoring communications and tying up all

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[16]Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 28-30; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, I, 475-83.

[17]Letcher to State Department, June 4, 1914/12160; copy in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 54.

[18]Carothers to State Department, June 6, 1914/12170; El Paso Morning Times, June 4, 5, 1914.

the railroad rolling stock. Villa also told Carothers that a shipment of ammunition, which he had personally paid for, had arrived in Tampico from Havana and that the Carrancistas were holding it. He warned that unless it was delivered immediately, he would break with Carranza. Carothers urged patience and promised to personally intercede with the First Chief, who now made his headquarters in Saltillo. The estrangement was doubly alarming, the special agent reported to Washington, because Villa was paying so much attention to politics that he was losing much of his old fighting energy. For example, he showed no inclination to go to Natera's aid at Zacatecas. Carothers, moreover, was not sure at all that he could do anything to prevent the split in the Constitutionalists' ranks.[19]

With the ABC mediation failing to oust Huerta as planned, Wilson was naturally concerned over any falling out among the revolutionaries that might in any way slow the pace of the war against the usurper. Carothers was urgently directed to use every means to prevent a split.[20] By the time these instructions reached him, the agent, attempting to appease Villa, had already made his way to the First Chief's headquarters. On June 13, he interviewed

[19]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, June 12, 1914/12219; copy in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 55.

[20]State Department to Carothers, June 13, 1914/12219.

Carranza, who reported that conditions were "improving." Carranza knew better; the next day he gleefully informed Carothers that after a heated six-hour telegraphic conversation, Villa had angrily resigned as commander of the Division of the North. Carranza insisted that Villa's arbitrary exercise of powers that belonged only to the First Chief had precipitated the break. The special agent was dismayed by Carranza's attitude and later recalled that the First Chief "appeared to be overjoyed that the breach had come, and would not listen to my reasoning. . . ."[21]

Hoping to influence Villa to change his mind and be more cooperative, Carothers immediately returned to Torreón. There he discovered that Carranza had not been entirely candid. The break, as Consul Edwards of Juárez had already reported to Washington, had resulted when the First Chief ordered Villa to detach 5000 of his troops to General Natera. Villa and his advisors, both civilian and military, had interpreted the order as a deliberate attempt to split and weaken the Division of the North. The Villistas attempted through hours of telegraphic communication to explain their reluctance to break up their

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[21] Carothers to State Department, June 11, 1914, NA 125.36582/88; Carothers to State Department, June 13, 14, 1914/12226, 12228; copies of both in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 55; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1771.

highly successful army and even offered to march en masse on Zacatecas, but Carranza refused to revoke his order. In a fit of pique, Villa then tendered his resignation.[22]

By the time Carothers reached Torreón, however, the officers of the Division of the North, having been forced to chose between their general and the First Chief, had refused to accept Villa's resignation and had declared their intention to stand by him. Feeling more righteous than ever, Villa took charge of the railroads and telegraphs in the area he controlled. His men also quietly removed the Carrancistas from their offices in Juárez and Chihuahua. Villa even dispatched an officer and a troop of men aboard a special train to Tampico, where they virtually stole the ammunition Villa claimed was his and returned it to Torreón. Then, in open defiance of Carranza, Villa began his own campaign against Zacatecas.[23]

Since telegraphic communications were made uncertain by the break, Carothers was again forced to travel to El Paso to make his report and get new instructions. Villa had asked him to impress upon President Wilson the fact that the Villistas would engage in no hostile action

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[22]Edwards to State Department, June 16, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 541-42; Carothers to State Department, June 18, 1914, ibid.; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1771.

[23]Ibid.; El Paso Morning Times, June 17, 18, 1914.

against Carranza. He wanted Washington to know that he planned to proceed south alone, but if he met other revolutionary armies he would encourage them to join him. Villa especially wanted Carothers to make clear his view that the General's actions would speed the progress of the revolution. The American agent also noted that the Chihuahua strong-man would gladly accept mediation by American officials. Carothers had not been in El Paso a day when news arrived that seemingly made mediation unnecessary. Villista officials reported that Carranza had "graciously" consented for Villa to "proceed south to Mexico City" and had agreed "to postpone settlement of differences between them until later."[24]

On June 20, Villa began his attack on Zacatecas, and within four days the city was his. Carothers, who was in Juárez at the time, relied upon information provided by the Villistas and reported that, as in the case of Torreón and Saltillo, Villa promptly restored order, established a civil government, and tended to the poor. Foreign lives and property, according to the Villistas, were carefully guarded. The only prisoners executed were snipers who continued to fire after the surrender. The wounded prisoners again received medical attention. As a result of such humane treatment, the Villistas claimed that 2000

[24]Carothers to State Department, June 18, 1914/12294; El Paso Morning Times, June 19, 1914.

prisoners had joined their ranks.[25]

Although distressed by the rift between Villa and Carranza, Wilson and Bryan must have been pleased by Villa's growing strength—strength that had earned him the nickname of Centaur of the North— and his continued humaneness and cooperation. Villa, for his part, was receiving ample cooperation from Carothers. The special agent's dispatches revealed that he sympathized overwhelmingly with the Villista faction. Many of his diplomatic efforts which were directed to the State Department and to Carranza were made in Villa's behalf.

Those who criticized the Wilson Administration's Mexican policy naturally gave the Villa-Carothers relationship close scrutiny. Senator Fall, a constant critic, upbraided the State Department for bypassing Marion Letcher (an old friend), the regular consular representative in Chihuahua. Fall claimed that Carothers would serve the interests of the United States only to a degree, then would do what was necessary to protect his own property interests in Torreón. Fall further maintained that Carothers had admitted as much.[26] Frank Mondell of Wyoming, a leading Republican critic in the House, found

[25]Carothers to State Department, July 5, 1914/12473; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 32-33; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, I, 536-37.

[26]Cong. Rec., 63 Cong., 2 Sess. (March 9, 1914), 4519-20.

the relationship between Villa and Carothers disgusting. Referring to the abrazo Villa had given Carothers at Juarez following the Vera Cruz incident, Mondell said that the American agent could "fondle" Mexican bandits if he chose to, but that he should not imply in his public comments that the United States approved of Villa's activities.[27]

In Mexico, Carranza had become increasingly dissatisfied with the Villa-Carothers friendship. On June 28, at the First Chief's direction, Alfredo Breceda and Rafael Zubarán Capmany, Constitutionalist agents in Washington, issued a statement to the press, condemning Carothers' activities. They charged that while Carothers "posed . . . as the confidential agent of the State Department," he was, in fact, serving as "a political attache and adviser of Villa in international matters."[28] Similarly they charged that Carothers' dispatches contained pro-Villa propaganda and that Villa's insubordination was prompted by the agent's promises of support from the Wilson Administration.[29]

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[27] Ibid., (April 27, 1914), 7331.

[28] New York World, June 28, 1914.

[29] Ibid.; New York Times, June 28, 1914, II, p. 1; New York Sun, June 28, 1914. The Sun, which was extremely anti-Administration, tended to expand the criticism of Carothers more than the other newspapers.

The most serious charges came from one of the Administration's friends, Republican Congressman William Kent of California. In early June, Kent brought to the attention of the President several letters sent him by Rene León of El Paso and Maurice León of New York. The Leóns, who professed to be Constitutionalist sympathizers, charged that Carothers was accepting lucrative business opportunities from Villa. Kent thought the charges worthy of an investigation.[30]

Considering their own reliance upon righteousness in the conduct of diplomacy, Wilson and Bryan would certainly have insisted upon an investigation had not Carothers himself earlier reported the business proposal. According to the agent, however, the offer came not from Villa but from a wealthy hacendado, who wanted Carothers to manage his large cotton plantation near Torreón. Previously, Carothers noted, Villa had confiscated the cotton from the plantation, and it was no longer in production. Under arrangements made with Villa, Carothers proposed to return the land to cotton production and pay

[30]Rene León to Kent, June 5 (two), 1914, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; Kent to Wilson, June 10, 1914, ibid.; copies of all three in Bryan Papers, Box 43; Wilson to Bryan, June 12, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 124; Kent to Wilson, June 17, 18, 1914, ibid. Wilson was interested enough in the León-Kent correspondence that, before passing it on to Bryan, he prepared a condensation of the letters on his own portable typewriter. See ibid.

the revolutionary army a tax of $15.00 per bale. The special agent also reported that Villa was willing to allow the other hacendados the same privilege. In this way the land would again produce and the armies would have a steady income. Well aware that such an activity might draw criticism to himself and to the Administration, Carothers asked if his brother could operate the plantation until the Constitutionalists were victorious. If this arrangement was not satisfactory, he regretfully reported that he would be forced to resign from the service of the Department.[31]

Wilson would not accept Carothers' proposed arrangement and directed Bryan to inform the special agent that if he accepted the business offer, he would have to resign from the Department.[32] When Bryan telegraphed the President's decision, Zach Cobb interceded in the agent's behalf. Carothers "is the best diplomat I ever saw in dealing with the Mexican people," he wired the Secretary of State, "and is patriotic in placing his duty to the government above personal interests."[33] Carothers meanwhile, reported that he was prepared to accept the business opportunity unless the Department specifically requested

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[31]Carothers to State Department, May 27, 1914/12343.

[32]Wilson to Bryan, June 5, 1914/12343.

[33]State Department to Carothers, June 4, 1914/12343; Cobb to State Department, June 4, 1914, NA 125.36582/83.

not to. With the tension between Villa and Carranza mounting in early June, Bryan decided that Carothers would be needed. On June 5, he asked the agent to forego the business offer and continue his work with Villa. The following day, the special agent replied that he had declined the overseer job and would immediately turn his efforts toward concilating Villa and Carranza.[34]

Since the President knew of Carothers' business opportunity, he exhibited no alarm in his return correspondence to Congressman Kent. When the Leóns persisted in their accusations later in June, Kent himself investigated further and determined that they were representing a group of French capitalists who were inclined to support Carranza in hopes of securing concessions.[35] Bryan, nonetheless, remained suspicious enough to carry through a plan that had been initiated earlier—to send a second special agent into Constitutionalist territory.

As early as April 24, 1914, when the antagonism between Villa and Carranza was first manifested, Boaz Long, Chief of the Department's Division on Latin American

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[34]Carothers to State Department, June 4, 1914, NA 125.36582/82; State Department to Carothers, June 5, 1914, ibid.; Carothers to State Department, June 6, 1914, ibid./84.

[35]Kent to Wilson, June 29, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 56; Wilson to Kent, June 30, 1914, ibid.; Wilson to Kent, ibid., Series IV, Box 124.

Affairs, suggested such a move.[36] Nothing was done about his suggestion until the Department was presented with the prospect of Carothers' possible resignation. Then Long suggested to the Secretary of State that several Spanish-speaking agents, who knew Mexican politics and were sympathetic to the Administration's designs for the future of Mexico, be sent to deal with the rebel leaders. In pursuance of this proposal, Long nominated Leon J. Canova to be sent immediately to Mexico to work with Carothers until he was thoroughly familiar with the Constitutionalist leaders. If he proved capable, he might then be attached to Carranza's headquarters or, if Carothers resigned, take his place.[37]

As was the custom under Wilson, Secretary Bryan submitted the proposal to the President for approval before taking action. Wilson heartily agreed with the wisdom of Long's plan but preferred to get an expert opinion of Canova's qualifications before tendering an appointment. Consequently, he directed Bryan to have Canova call upon General Hugh L. Scott, currently Deputy Chief of Staff of

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[36]Long to Bryan, April 24, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 107. At this time Long actually nominated one William A. McLaren, whom Chief Counselor Robert Lansing, Assistant Secretary William Phillips, and John Lind all recommended, to serve as an agent. I was not able to determine why McLaren did not receive an appointment.

[37]Long to Bryan, June 1, 1914/12342.

the Army, for an interview.[38] On June 8, Canova met with Scott at Princeton, New Jersey. Afterwards, the general reported that Canova's credentials were quite satisfactory. At the same time, Scott, who admired Carothers and approved of his work, warned that the respective duties of Carothers and Canova be carefully designated so as to prevent any possibility of their working at cross-purposes. He also recommended that Carothers approve of the new agent before he was permanently assigned.[39] Both John Lind and Robert Lansing added their endorsements to Scott's. The decision was made, therefore, to send a second agent among the Constitutionalists.[40]

Canova's State Department dossier reveals that he had wide experience among Latin American people. Born of Spanish-speaking parents in St. Augustine, Florida, on February 22, 1866, and orphaned at an early age, Canova moved about Florida working at various jobs until Henry George, Jr., befriended him in 1893 and gave him a job with a Jacksonville newspaper. Canova was soon doing special work for the New York World and later became the Associated Press representative for Southern Florida.

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[38]Wilson to Bryan, June 5, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 56.

[39]Bryan to Scott, June 8, 1914, Scott Papers, Box 15; Scott to Bryan, June 9, 1914, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence.

[40]Bryan to Wilson, June 13, 1914, Bryan Papers, Box 43; Wilson to Bryan, ibid.

While serving as a reporter, he became a sympathizer of Cuban revolutionaries and assisted them in planning and launching filibuster expeditions from the Florida coast. When the Spanish-American War broke out, he went to Cuba to cover the war for the Associated Press. After the war, he remained in Cuba to serve as correspondent for the New York World. He soon found better opportunities with the Cuban press and served successively as managing editor of two of Havana's leading newspapers, the Herald and La Lucha. In 1909, when the Cuban government created an official information bureau, the president named Canova to head it. He served in that capacity until September, 1913, when he returned to the United States to allow his children to attend American schools. While in Cuba, Canova wrote two books that were published in the United States, Cuba's New Government (1909) and Cuba (1910).[41]

In need of a job, Canova, short and round-faced, had actively sought a position with the State Department. On

[41]Memorandum attached to Long to Bryan, June 1, 1914/12342; Register of the Department of State, 1917, 80; Who's Who In America, XII (1922-1923), 612; photograph of Canova in El Pueblo, October 20, 1914. During and after the Spanish-American War, Canova must have become acquainted with many officers of the United States Army, because he offered a list of officers' names as references. See Canova to Bryan, June 9, 1914/12252. He may well have known Bryan during the war, because the salutations of his letters to the Secretary of State usually read: "My Dear Colonel." During the war, Bryan was a colonel in the Nebraska volunteers. See Paolo E. Coletta, William Jennings Bryan, Vol. I: Political Evangelist, 1860-1908 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), 226.

May 24, he addressed a letter of application to the Department in which he revealed, among other things, a great sympathy for the Mexican revolutionaries. If they were to avoid the chaos that free Cuba had experienced, he warned, they might well look to the United States for guidance. To lay the foundation for such an arrangement, he believed it necessary for the State Department to send to Mexico a number of representatives who spoke Spanish and understood the nature of Latin-American characteristics, customs, and politics. If the United States was to successfully back the "right" revolutionary leaders, these agents, thought Canova, should not only scrutinize the professed purposes and aims of the various leaders but should "go deeper—and fathom their intentions and ambitions; to eat, sleep, and live with these men, so as to better be enabled to analyze their general intelligence, their qualifications to govern, their sense of responsibility, and, in fact, to take their exact moral measure."[42] Certainly Canova's expressions were fully in keeping with Wilsonian foreign policy, and they must have caught the eye of both the President and Secretary of State.

Canova may well have purposely designed his remarks to impress Bryan and Wilson. Future events were to prove that he was an opportunist. In fact, he may have been coached by Boaz Long to make such pleasing comments.

[42]Canova to State Department, May 24, 1914/12342.

Except for his interview with Scott, Canova's dealings had been with the Chief of the Department's Division of Latin American Affairs. Long had never sympathized with the Administration's Mexican policy. A "deserving Democrat" from New Mexico, Long had received his appointment in May, 1913, because he was a friend of Vice-President Thomas R. Marshall. His sole claim to experience in Latin America rested with the fact that he ran a commission business with a branch office in Mexico City. He had Wall Street connections and, from the beginning, was an advocate of "dollar diplomacy." At every opportunity he sought to promote the security of American investments in Latin America. For that reason he had been ill at ease while such agents as Hale and Lind served in Mexico. He had no quarrels with Carothers' work, since, before June, 1914, Carothers was engaged primarily in protecting foreign-owned property. Canova, who in time was to reveal that he shared some of Long's attitudes, was the only agent actively recruited by the Division Chief. Long desired to recruit others; but his disagreements with Bryan became so pronounced by June, 1914, that he was relieved as Division Chief and appointed Minister to El Salvador. There he continued to promote American business interests and, from time to time, express views on Mexican affairs.[43]

[43]Grieb, United States and Huerta, 72; Link, Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 100; Link, New Freedom, 97-98; Colletta, Progressive Politican and Moral Statesman,

Despite his association with Long, Canova's credentials, plus the endorsement from Scott, seemed to mark him as an ideal candidate to serve in Mexico. The growing rift between Villa and Carranza, moreover, cried for the increased attention of the State Department. Accordingly, on June 19, Canova received an assignment as "special representative on roving mission" and was directed to proceed to El Paso to meet Carothers. He was granted a salary of two hundred dollars per month and all legitimate expenses. His primary duty was to make an exhaustive study of conditions in Mexico and to familiarize himself with all the principal leaders. Nothing was said about a later assignment to Carranza's headquarters. The only restriction placed on him was that he was to remain with Carothers until he was deemed experienced enough to go on his own.[44] Although it was not stated in his written instructions, his despatches from Mexico reveal that he was also to determine if there was any validity to the charges recently leveled at Carothers.

Since, on the very day Canova received his appointment, Carothers had requested that the Department provide funds for an assistant, he was more than pleased to welcome Canova when he arrived in El Paso on June 25.

112; Link, The Struggle for Neutrality, 498-99.

[44]State Department to Canova, June 19, 1914, and State Department to Carothers, June 20, 1914/12343.

Carothers was quite satisfied with the new agent. Canova, for his part, reported within days that all the Department had heard of Carothers' effectiveness was true. Their immediate friendship allowed them to work in harmony from the beginning. After spending two days in El Paso and Juárez, during which Canova familiarized himself with Constitutionalist activity in the area and met local officials, the two American agents set out to join Villa, who only days before had captured Zacatecas.[45]

Since the rail lines south of Juárez were damaged by washouts caused by unusually heavy rains, the two Americans were forced to take a roundabout route by way of San Antonio and Saltillo. This long detour, however, was not an inconvenience, since Saltillo was Carranza's headquarters, and Canova gained an excellent opportunity to meet the First Chief and his cabinet.[46] But trouble loomed in their path. While Canova and Carothers were conferring in El Paso, Carranza, determined to slow Villa's southward march and to punish his insubordination, immobilized the Division of the North by cutting off all supplies of fuel and ammunition. Denied access to

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[45]Carothers to State Department, June 19, 1914, NA 125.35682/93; Carothers to State Department, June 25, 1914/12348; Canova to State Department, June 28, 1914/12386; Cobb to Scott, Scott Papers, Box 15; El Paso Morning Times, June 27, 1914.

[46]Carothers to State Department, June 26, 1914, NA 125.36582/93.

supplies from the border by the arms embargo and by washouts on the rail lines, Villa could do nothing but watch other Constitutionalist armies sweep southward toward Mexico City and ultimate victory. With each mile of victorious march by Generals González and Obregón, Villa's resentment toward the First Chief mounted. The schism between the two revolutionary leaders now seem irreparable.[47]

In Washington Wilson and Bryan were still hopeful of maintaining revolutionary solidarity. Accordingly, Carothers and Canova were directed to "urgently appeal" to both Carranza and Villa "to forget their differences and cooperate for the securing of reforms necessary to the restoration of peace."[48] In order to avert any misunderstanding between the agents and the regularly accredited consuls (as had arisen between Carothers and Letcher) in Northern Mexico, the Department issued a directive informing the consuls that they should coordinate their efforts with those of the two agents.[49]

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[47] Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 33-34.

[48] State Department to Carothers, June 30, 1914/12381a.

[49] Secretary of State to certain American Consuls, July 1, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 553. Just prior to the issuance of this directive, Consul Letcher of Chihuahua had explained that his failure to cooperate with Carothers was due mainly to the Department's failure to clarify the responsibilities of the agents. See Silliman to State Department, June 11, 1914, NA 125.36582/131.

The main obstacle to the effectiveness of the agents was not the American consuls but Carranza. By this time the Carrancistas had leveled their charges against Carothers for his supposed promotion of Villa's insubordination. Carothers, therefore, was highly suspect in Carrancista territory. There was a great deal of speculation along the border that, at worst, the two agents would be turned back at Laredo or, at best, that Carranza would ignore them if they were allowed to proceed to Saltillo.[50]

There were no incidents. In fact, Carothers and Canova were invited to join Carranza's party at Monterrey and rode the same train to Saltillo. The trip gave Carothers an opportunity to introduce Canova to the First Chief's advisors. The day of their arrival, July 1, they sought a conference with the First Chief. Despite the fact that a large crowd of people was waiting to see Carranza, the two Americans were ushered in ahead of them and granted a half-hour interview. After being introduced and exchanging pleasantries with the First Chief, Canova allowed Carothers to do all the talking while he took detailed notes on the conversation. Here, at the first opportunity, Canova exhibited a talent for describing and and capturing detail that none of the other agents in

[50] New York World, June 28, 1914; El Paso Morning Times, June 30, 1914.

Mexico ever mastered. While Carranza ranted about his insubordinate general, Canova noted every facial expression and gesture and described every change in tone of voice.[51]

While in route to Saltillo, the two agents were informed that General González had arranged for a commission of Carrancista generals to go to Torreón to meet with a commission of Villista generals in an attempt to hammer out some accommodation between the two factions. This conference of generals, then, was the main topic of Carothers' interview with Carranza. The First Chief quickly made clear that his generals had gone on their own initiative and not at his instruction. When Carothers urged him to cooperate in arranging a solution, the old chieftain replied that if the trouble between the two continued, it would be Villa's fault. "Villa thinks he is indispensible to the Constitutionalist cause," Carranza stormed. "Well, he is mistaken. No individual who defies constituted authorities is indispensible. . . ." He ended his harangue by indicating that there could be no conciliation unless Villa agreed to be obedient in the

[51]Canova to State Department, July 2, 1914/12462; Carothers to State Department, July 5, 1914/12472. Canova's despatches bear evidence of his newspaper training. He was a keen observer, and, in pursuance of his instructions, he described in detail all that he saw. His reports are a veritable storehouse of information about the personalities and conditions in revolutionary Mexico.

future.[52]

After the interview, the two Americans discussed the Carranza-Villa dispute with Heriberto Barrón, an influential newspaper editor. Barrón indicated that if the breach were not sealed soon, many of the Carrancistas would go over to Villa, since he was accomplishing more militarily than anyone else. With the situation being so critical, Carothers decided to accompany the Carrancista generals to Torreón and use his influence with the Villistas in attempting to repair the breach. Taking a chance on Canova's inexperience, he also decided to leave the new agent in Saltillo. This way, he hoped, Carranza would not feel slighted, and, with Canova pressuring the Carrancistas, and himself the Villistas, there was a chance in aiding the estranged parties to a conciliation.[53]

In Torreón Carothers found Villa unrepentant. When the special agent revealed that his government wished above all for Villa to settle his differences with the First Chief, the general replied: "Is it possible that a great nation like yours cannot see what kind of man Carranza is?" He then insisted that the First Chief was surrounding himself with politicians and slackers who were primarily concerned about their own futures and would, in the

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid.; Carothers to State Department, July 2, 1914, NA 125.36582/96; Carothers to State Department, July 5, 1914/12472.

long-run, establish a regime as despotic as those of the past. Villa claimed that the armies were beginning to see that Carranza was not seeking reform and that he was not the leader who could save the country from further revolution. As a temporary expedient, however, Villa agreed to conciliate the First Chief, since a break could only help Huerta.[54]

Conciliation did, indeed, reign at Torreón. On July 8, after five days of wrangling, the Villista and Carrancista generals worked out an apparently satisfactory settlement. The Pact of Torreón, as the agreement was called, stipulated that the Division of the North recognize Carranza as First Chief, but that Villa should remain in command of the Division. Carranza was to supply Villa with all the fuel and ammunition he needed, and Villa was to report all his actions to the First Chief for acceptance. The conferees also drew up a list of twelve men from which Carranza was to pick his cabinet when he became interim president following the victorious revolution. This clause was inserted to insure that some Villistas were included. The interim president, upon taking office, was to call a convention, the delegates to be chosen by the division commanders on the basis of one delegate for every 1000 troops in the ranks. The convention was to be a preconstitutional devise which would

[54]Carothers to State Department, July 5, 1914/12472.

decide upon a plan of government, institute needed reforms, and call elections for the regular government. In addition, the agreement stated that no member of the army could be a candidate for the presidency, nor could the interim president seek the permanent office.[55]

Carothers reported that the agreement was even more of a diplomatic victory for Villa than appeared on the surface. In addition to the formal pact, the Carrancistas agreed to two secret informal provisions: that General Felipe Angeles, who was Villa's closest advisor, would be commander of all the Constitutionalist armies, and that the railroads would be administered by Eusébio Calzádo, also Villa's man. Carothers thought it significant that the generals of the Northeast had allied with those of the North in calling for a convention and in eliminating Carranza from possible contention for the elective presidency.[56] Both provisions were counter to the First Chief's Plan of Guadalupe.

From Saltillo, Canova reported that Carranza showed signs of relief upon hearing that the generals in Torreón were working toward an agreement. But when he received the finished pact, he refused to ratify it. He did tell Canova, however, that as far as he was concerned the

[55]"Pacto de Torreón," González Ramírez, Planes políticos y otros documentos, 152-57; Carothers to State Department, July 8, 9, 1914/12470, 12717.

[56]Ibid.

difficulties with Villa were settled. He also told the American agent that if another rupture occurred, "it will come through some act of Villa."[57] Despite Carranza's refusal to accept the letter of the Pact of Torreón, the Constitutionalists once again presented a facade of solidarity.

Canova, meanwhile, had studied Carranza and his advisors carefully and had begun to report his impressions. His assessment of the First Chief was, perhaps, the most balanced yet received by the State Department. Carranza, he revealed, was "an able man, a good executive who maintains exceptional order in his district."[58] He also noted that Carranza was a gentle man who loved flowers and was uncommonly affectionate toward his wife and two daughters. Canova found that the First Chief, when satisfied that all was going well, could be a most pleasant companion. The special agent was especially impressed by Carranza's honesty and integrity.[59]

Canova's reports from Saltillo also tended to promote another dark image of Carranza. Canova was surprised that the First Chief was not greeted by the people with adulation. Instead, when he walked among them, "a deep hush

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[57] Canova to State Department, July 10, 14 (two), 1914/27406, 12501, 12564.

[58] Canova to State Department, July 10, 1914/27406.

[59] Ibid.; Canova to State Department, July 5, 8, 14, 1914/12495, 12474, 12564.

prevailed." They seemed more embarrassed than pleased by his presence.[60] Canova also noted, as had others before him, that Carranza was rigid in his beliefs and was inclined to take offense at even the slightest difference of opinion; hence he was inclined to make "pets" of those who agreed with him.[61]

Canova was cordially received by Carranza's advisors, and he established a number of friendships in Saltillo that were to last the duration of his mission. A number of the Carrancistas took the American into their confidence; some were apparently influenced by his appeals.[62] He was particularly proud of one incident. After he had impressed upon one of Carranza's anti-Villa cabinet members the necessity of disposing of personal jealousies and of maintaining harmony within the Constitutionalist camp for the sake of the revolution, the official arose, clutched Canova in an abrazo, and exlaimed, "Que Simpatica" (how understanding). Shortly thereafter that same official sent Villa a personal note of conciliation.[63]

The Carrancistas, Canova found, went out of their way to downgrade Villa's achievements. The victories of other

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[60] Canova to State Department, July 2, 1914/12462.

[61] Canova to State Department, July 5, 8, 1914/12495, 12474.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Canova to State Department, July 14, 1914/12654.

generals were celebrated with speeches and the ringing of church-bells, while those of the Division of the North were only grudgingly mentioned to the people. Even those who were willing to acknowledge that Villa was a good soldier, true to the revolutionary cause, believed that he was too susceptible to the influences of certain members of the Madero family. Having failed to win prominence in politics through martyred President Madero, they now sought to use Villa. After many conversations with the Carrancistas, and even before meeting Villa, Canova was inclined to believe that their criticisms were prompted primarily by jealousy of Villa's success and his popularity with the people.[64]

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[64]Canova to State Department, July 8, 10, 14, 1914/ 12474, 27406, 12564. The letter dated July 10, bearing the file number 27406, was not received by the Index Bureau of the Department of State until July, 1924. Perhaps the explanation for the delay in its being placed in the regular Department files is that it was withheld by Bryan, as were some of the reports of Del Valle and Hale. The July 10 letter and several others from Canova were not addressed to the Department but to Bryan at Thirteenth and Clifton Streets, Washington, D.C. These letters were much more intimate and opinionated than regular ones received by the Department.

The charges that the Maderos were politically ambitious may have resulted from the high degree of nepotism practiced by Francisco Madero when he was president. Eleven different members of the Madero family held government offices during his administration. Whether justified or not, this led to charges that they were using their kinsman president to further their own ambitions. See Ross, Madero, 223; González Ramírez, Las Ideas - La Violencia, 312-16. During the Constitutionalist Revolution, several members of the Madero family, notably brother Raul, who was a colonel in the Division of the North, and other members of the Madero clique, notably

His experience in Carranza's camp also gave Canova some definite ideas about the future of the revolution. The agent believed that the spirit of revolution was so ingrained in the Mexican people that the slightest dissatisfaction with the results of the current revolution would sprout a new one. "The only salvation for this country," he wrote to Bryan, "is a supervision over its affairs by the United States. . . ." Lacking the confidence in the Constitutionalists that Lind had exhibited, Canova insisted that the United States should insist upon a supervisory plan similar to the Platt Amendment. He acknowledged that the Constitutionalists might resist, but he thought they might also acquiesce if the United States offered a $100,000,000 loan, which they could use to speedily implement their program of reform. With such funds at their disposal, the Constitutionalists could rest assured that their revolution would be complete.[65]

Certainly Canova's proposal fit within the framework of Wilsonian foreign policy. Considering his cordial relations with the Carrancistas and his faith that he

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Miguel Díaz Lombardo, Madero's Minister of Public Instruction, joined forces with Villa or supported him in one way or another. See Guzmán, Memoirs of Pancho Villa, 121, 147, 223, 282.

[65]Canova to State Department, July 10, 1914/27406.

could persuade them to accept American supervision, Canova seemed to be the ideal agent to accompany Carranza. In fact, he asked for permission to accompany the First Chief, first to Tampico, then southward through San Luis Potosí, as he advanced on Mexico City. Carothers agreed that Canova should remain with the First Chief.[66] But Bryan over-rode his agents' advice because he and Wilson had already decided to try another agent in Carranza's camp, one who was on even more friendly terms with the First Chief.

Until recently the Vice and Deputy Consul at Saltillo, John Reid Silliman, the new agent, received his appointment through the most extraordinary circumstances. On April 21, at the time of the Vera Cruz intervention, he, along with his wife, the consular clerk, Joseph R. Marchani, and most of the other Americans in Saltillo, were arrested by the Federal commander, a nephew of Huerta, General Joaquín Maas. Having quarreled with Maas in the past, Silliman expected the worst. The Consulate was sacked and the possessions, including a copy of the State Department's "red code," were confiscated. When some of the consul's dispatches, which contained comments concerning both rebel and Federal

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[66] Canova to State Department July 18, 1914/12554; Carothers to State Department, July 18, 1914, NA 125. 36582; State Department to Carothers, July 18 (two), 1914/ 12554.

military activities, were decoded by General Maas's officers, Silliman was charged with espionage. Although Mrs. Silliman was released to the custody of the British Vice Consul, Silliman was held incommunicado in a vermin-infested prison for twenty-one days. During that time, while his health began to fail, he was repeatedly threatened with execution. He was forced to endure even greater anxieties when, on May 6, the other Americans were released, while he was left alone to face his tormentors.[67]

Following directions from Washington, the Brazilian Minister in Mexico City, J. M. Cardoso de Oliveira, who represented the interests of the United States following the Vera Cruz incident, made an earnest appeal in Silliman's behalf and, on May 11, secured his release. En route to safety, Silliman endured even more ordeals. The train ride from Saltillo to Mexico City, which normally would take twelve hours, took seven days. His train was repeatedly attacked by revolutionary bands.

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[67] Silliman to State Department, February 13, 1914, NA 125.8276/11; H. Booth to Bryan, May 5, 1914, ibid., 125.8273/28; Canada to State Department, May 11, 1914, ibid./14; Dr. J. Franklin Moore to State Department, including transcript of an interview with Boaz Long, May 22, 1914, ibid./60; Silliman to Bryan, June 18, 1914, ibid./88; Mexican Herald, April 28, May 12, 13, 1914; New York Times, May 5, 6, 1914, p. 2; ibid., May 8, 9, 1914, p. 1. At the same time of Silliman's arrest, the American Consul General at Monterrey, Phillip Hanna, and the American Consular Agent at San Luis Potosí, William Bonney, were arrested. They were quickly released. See Hanna to State Department, Foreign Relations, 1914, 659-60; New York Times, May 6, 1914, p. 2.

Further delays resulted from intermittent damage to the rail line. Arriving in Mexico City in ill health, he was allowed two days to recuperate before being whisked to Washington.[68]

Both Silliman and Wilson had been members of the Princeton class of 1879, and Silliman returned to a hero's welcome at the class reunion held June 13. Although he did not see the President at the reunion, Silliman journeyed to Washington shortly thereafter and, on more than one occasion, discussed his trepidations with his old classmate. In the process, he urged that the vice consular post at Saltillo be elevated to a higher grade. Wilson, as a gesture of solace for Silliman's ordeal, gave his old friend a verbal agreement that he would receive a promotion. The lone obstacle to his return to Mexico was the charges of espionage still hanging over his head. This impediment was removed, however, when Cardoso de Oliveira reported, on June 8, that the charges had been dropped.[69]

[68]State Department to Oliveira, May 4, 5, 15, 22, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 660-62, 664-65; Oliveira to State Department, May 5, 10, 11, 22, 1914, ibid., 662-65; Mexican Herald, May 23, 25, 27, 29, 1914; New York Times, May 12, 1914, p. 1; ibid., May 13, 1914, p. 2; ibid., May 14, 1914, p. 3; ibid., May 23, 1914, p. 4.

[69]Silliman to Wilson, April 16, 1915, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 129; Silliman to Bryan, June 20, 1914 (two), Bryan Papers, Box 30; Wilson to Bryan, July 20, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 111; Bryan to Wilson, July 2, 1914, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; State Department to Oliveria, June 6, 1914, Foreign Relations,

Alabama-born and reared, Silliman, white-haired and dignified in appearance, was fifty-nine years old in 1914. Slow and deliberate in his speech and movements, he had moved to Texas after graduating from Princeton and had worked first as a railroad clerk, then as an insurance agent. Moving to the Mexican state of Coahuila in 1897, he engaged in farming and dairying. In 1907, he was appointed Vice and Deputy Consul at Saltillo. During his residence in that city, he was befriended by Carranza, who was governor of the state, and by Isidro Fabela, who later became Carranza's Foreign Minister.[70]

While in Washington in June, 1914, Silliman professed to be on intimate terms with Carranza. When Bryan showed an interest in the relationship, the consul prepared a memorandum for the Secretary of State, depicting the First Chief's character in glowing terms.[71] Lind,

1914, 666; Oliveira to State Department, June 8, 1914, ibid., 667; New York Times, June 7, 1914, p. 9; New York Sun, July 14, 1914, in Buckley Papers, File no. 233.

[70]Register of the Department of State, 1917, 137; Carroll, "United States Special Agents Powerful in Mexico," New York Sun, August 15, 1915; New York Times, May 5, 1914, p. 2; New York World, July 3, 1914; Testimony of Buckley, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 812; Fabela, Historia Diplomatic de la Revolución Mexicana, I, 229; photograph of Silliman in El Pueblo, November 5, 1914.

[71]Bryan to Wilson, January 22, 1915, Bryan Papers, Box 43; Bryan to Wilson, June 11, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 49. The first cited letter above reveals that Silliman definitely claimed to be on intimate terms with Carranza. By the second cited letter above, Bryan conveys to Wilson Silliman's estimate of Carranza's character. The letter describes the memorandum, but the memorandum, itself, was not to be found.

meanwhile, suggested that Silliman would be an ideal agent to assign to Carranza's headquarters. The decision was made, therefore, to send Silliman back to Saltillo as a full consul.[72] His past friendship with Carranza, Bryan and Wilson hoped, would allow Silliman to establish a relationship such as Carothers enjoyed with Villa.

Silliman returned to Saltillo on July 8 and, according to his own testimony, "no American should have hoped for a more friendly personal reception. . . ." He apparently bore no written instructions and, at first, was considered only a consul. But from the tenor of his first report, it is clear that he had been directed to make a last-ditch appeal for Carranza to cooperate with Huerta's delegates to the Niagara Falls Conference. On July 9, accompanied by Canova, Silliman conferred with Carranza and Fabela. As an incentive for cooperation with the Huertistas, the consul held out the prospect of immediate diplomatic recognition by the United States and the ABC powers. But Silliman's appeals proved no more effective than those previously made by other representatives of the Wilson Administration. The First Chief replied that the only matter he would discuss with anyone was Huerta's

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[72] Ibid.; Register of the State Department, 1917, 137; New York Times, July 3, 1914, p. 3. The position of Consul at Saltillo was not created until January, 1915. By executive order of July 3, 1914, Silliman was made a full consul, but served at a vice consular post.

unconditional surrender.[73]

Wilson and Bryan must have been disappointed that even an old friend could not move Carranza to cooperate with the United States. They would have also been disappointed in their new agent had they been in Saltillo to witness his first confrontation with the First Chief. Canova reported that he had "never listened to anything so distressing." Silliman, he revealed, was not competent in expressing himself in Spanish. It took him two hours and forty-five minutes to say what should have taken fifteen minutes. Every few words, he had to ask for guidance from Foreign Minister Fabela. He often wandered from the subject at hand and interjected his personal experiences. When he told the First Chief of his imprisonment by General Maas, his voice broke and his eyes filled with tears. During Silliman's lengthy dissertation, Canova reported, Carranza and Fabela exchanged embarrassed glances, rolling their eyes upward in a sign of impatience.[74]

During this meeting, Silliman also gave another clue as to what his unwritten instructions included. His reception by the First Chief would obviously determine his future status, because he asked Carranza and Fabela for letters of recommendation that he might forward to

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[73]Silliman to State Department, July 10, 1914/12469.

[74]Canova to State Department, July 22, 1914/27426.

Washington. Canova was thoroughly disgusted by Silliman's pandering after the approval of the First Chief and recommended that Consul General Phillip Hanna of Monterrey be assigned to Carranza's headquarters instead. When Canova's report was received in Washington, President Wilson was, indeed, disturbed, but only at Silliman's lack of fluency in Spanish. He apparently was more impressed by Silliman's own report of the cordial reception given him by the Carrancistas. He, therefore, recommended no change in Silliman's status.[75] Bryan, meanwhile, moved to remedy the agent's most obvious deficiency—his poor Spanish. The secretary of State arranged for an employee of the Pan American Union, John W. Belt, who spoke and wrote fluent Spanish, and who was about to visit Mexico in the company of Luis Cabrera, to call upon Silliman and offer his services as a stenographer. Silliman found Belt quite satisfactory and employed him as a consular assistant.[76]

While the revolutionary leaders in Northern Mexico quarreled and Wilson's agents scurried about attempting to promote revolutionary solidarity, Victoriano Huerta's power steadily deteriorated. During the spring and summer

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[75]Wilson to Bryan, July 30, 1914/27480.

[76]Silliman to State Department, July 25, 1914, NA 125.8273/100; Department to Silliman, July 27, 1914, ibid.; Silliman to State Department, July 30, 31, 1914, ibid./ 103, 104.

of 1914, the provisional president gradually became estranged from his cabinet and the legislature. Militarily he was sorely pressed by Villa from Zacatecas; by Obregón, who had captured Guadalajara on July 8; and by General Jesús Carranza, who was driving toward San Luis Potosí. Zapata, moreover, controlled the countryside around the national capital and, from time to time, made forays into the suburbs. The port of Vera Cruz was still occupied by American forces, and Tampico was in the hands of the rebels. Cut off from his main sources of revenue and unable to obtain arms or credit, Huerta resigned on July 15, turned over the government to his Secretary of Foreign Relations, Francisco Carbajal, and fled the country.[77]

The dictator had fallen, and Wilson's intervention had been a decisive factor in his elimination. Months of a steadily applied policy had finally borne fruit. But there were still potantial pitfalls in the way of the Puritan President's design for the renovation of Mexico.

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[77] Rausch, "Huerta," 225-31; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 45-48; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, I, 564-71; Womack, Zapata, 186-88. Huerta having gone into exile in Europe, returned to the United States in June, 1915, to arrange a counterrevolution with Pascual Orozco. Arrested in El Paso for conspiracy to violate the neutrality laws of the United States, he died in custody on January 13, 1916, of cirrhosis of the liver and complications following gaul bladder surgery. See George J. Rausch, Jr., "The Exile and Death of Victoriano Huerta," Hispanic American Historical Review, XLII (February, 1962), 131-51.

The continued success of his policy now depended upon the maintenance of solidarity within the Constitutionalist camp. Wilson and Bryan were encouraged, therefore, when Carranza, upon receiving the news of Huerta's flight, asked Canova to go to Torreón and assure Villa that the Carrancistas wanted peace within the revolutionary family. Accordingly, Bryan directed the agent to join Villa as Carranza had suggested and to impress upon him the folly of further discord. He was also to remind the Centaur of the North that his actions in the future would have a great bearing on the manner in which the new revolutionary government was received by the world powers. Carothers was directed to do the same, while Silliman was ordered to remain constantly with Carranza and make similar representations. Silliman's new instructions constituted the first official designation of his status as an executive agent.[78] The demise of Huerta, therefore, saw no slackening in the activities of the special agents.

Canova's journey to Torreón was as arduous as it was fruitless. Traveling by rail, he was forced to stand in an overcrowded passenger coach. When he arrived on July 19, he was suffering from the malady—diarrhea and severe abdominal pains—that so often plagues newcomers to Mexico.

[78]Canova to State Department, July 14, 1914/12564; State Department to Canova, July 16, 1914/12501; State Department to Carothers, July 20, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 567; State Department to Silliman, July 16, 1914, ibid., 564.

Finding that both Villa and Carothers had gone to Juárez, and feeling too ill to remain there alone without medical attention, Canova decided to return to Monterrey, where Carranza had moved his headquarters. After a bone-harring return ride on the floor of a boxcar, Canova's illness was so accute that he required over a week to recuperate.[79]

Even while Special Agent Canova was convalescing in Monterrey, he received orders on July 22 to proceed to Zacatecas and investigate reports of atrocities committed against the Roman Catholic clergy in that city. Among the other acts of cruelty, the French Charge' d'Affaires in Washington reported that two French Christian Brothers had been executed. Coincidentally, General Natera, whose forces were occupying Zacatecas, was in Monterrey meeting with the First Chief when Canova received his orders. Carranza, obviously well disposed toward Canova, directed Natera to cooperate fully with the American agent. The First Chief also wired the acting governor of the state of Zacatecas to assist Canova.[80]

The trip to Zacatecas exposed Canova to even more of

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[79]Canova to State Department, July 22 (two), 25, 1914/12588, 27426, 12650.

[80]Clausse, Charge' d'Affairs of the Republic of France, to State Department, July 16, 1914, NA 312.51/57; State Department to Canova, July 22, 1914, ibid./63a; Canova to State Department, July 27, 1914, ibid./73.

the hazards of diplomacy in revolutionary Mexico. When the agent arrived at the depot at the previously arranged time of departure, Natera was not to be found. Canova and Fabela then spent hours searching the houses of prostitution until they found the general dead drunk. Having discovered from his recent trip to Torreón that traveling in a crowded passenger coach on a Mexican train was an experience to avoid, Canova decided to ride a boxcar to Zacatecas. Taking a folding cot, which was not part of his "necessary" equipment, the special agent found himself a large enough spot between boxes of dynamite and ammunition and, preferring the company of high explosives to the crowds in the passenger coaches, enjoyed a relatively comfortable trip to Zacatecas.[81]

Arriving there on August 1, Canova, for the first time, seems to have become fully aware of the horrors of the revolutionary war. Zacatecas was the first city he visited that had only recently been ravaged by war. Accustomed to the relative prosperity of the farming areas around Saltillo and Torreón, the special agent was appalled by the physical damage done to this mining town and by the suffering of the people. Having associated with the upper-classes in Cuba and with the gentlemen in Carranza's camp, Canova naturally gravitated toward the same type of people in Zacatecas. From what was left of the upper and

[81]Canova to State Department, August 4, 1914/12826.

middle-class element, he received an entirely different account of the battle and occupation of the city from the one Carothers had reported. Carothers had relied upon the word of the Villistas; Canova upon those who claimed to be victims of Villa's justice. They insisted that there had been wholesale despoilation of private property and that there had been unspeakable acts of cruelty committed against the Federals and the clergy. Canova also reported that the "better" element of Zacatecas begged for intervention by the United States. The peons, he continued, were happy with the course of the revolution and enjoyed "lording it over the more intelligent people."[82]

As directed, Canova appealed to General Natera to ease his persecution of the clergy. The general would do nothing to prevent the forced taxation and confiscation of church property, but on August 7, he did allow one church to reopen for mass. That day literally thousands crowded before the church to celebrate their first mass in over a month. Afterwards, Canova was not sure whether it was his pleas or those of the thousands of devout Roman Catholics in the city that persuaded the harsh

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[82] Ibid.; Canova to State Department, August 10, 14, 1914/12888, 12979; Canova to State Department, August 3, 1914, NA 312.51/80. Canova's reconstruction of the battle of Zacatecas and the occupation that followed was so vividly gory that Bryan directed him to be more factual and to delete "opinion" from his official reports. Bryan to Carothers, August 15, 1914/12826.

Mexican general to moderate his stand against the church.[83]

Canova had been in Zacatecas ten days when he received orders to join General Obregón. With Carranza refusing to accept any terms from Provisional President Carbajal other than unconditional surrender, there was grave concern in Washington that Obregón might carry the fighting into the heart of Mexico City. Wilson and Bryan, therefore, wanted one of their agents to accompany the general and plead for clemency for the hapless populace of the capital.[84] Although Canova was nearer to Obregón's advancing army than any of the other agents, he was unable to rendezvous with Obregón before he entered the capital, because the rail lines between Zacatecas and Mexico City had been heavily damaged by the retreating Huertistas.[85]

Silliman, meanwhile, had been ordered to urge the First Chief to receive representatives from Carbajal and to use his influence in arranging the transfer of the capital into the hands of the revolutionaries. Joined by Consul General Hanna, Silliman called upon Carranza in Monterrey on July 19 and handed him the Department's note. The First Chief expressed appreciation for the "good offices" extended by the United States and agreed to meet

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[83] Canova to State Department, August 10, 1914/12888.

[84] State Department to Canova, August 11, 1914/12832b.

[85] Canova to State Department, August 14, 16, 1914/12863, 12880.

with any "duly accredited and fully authorized representatives" of the Mexico City government. He insisted, however, that the only terms he would discuss were the unconditional delivery of the capital to the Constitutionalists and the unconditional surrender of the Federal armies. He also suggested Saltillo as a meeting place and recommended that Carbajal's delegates come directly north by way of San Luis Potosí.[86]

Carranza's proposal was forwarded to Carbajal through Cardoso de Oliveira, the Brazilian Minister to Mexico City. Carbajal at first balked at sending representatives into the enemy's territory; but when the Wilson Administration refused to support his request for a conference in neutral New York, he relented and agreed to the meeting in Saltillo. In an apparent effort to preserve some dignity, the delegates, General Lauro Villar, Chief Justice of the Supreme Military Court, and David Gutiérrez Allende, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, instead of taking Carranza's proposed route to Saltillo, journeyed instead by way of Vera Cruz and Tampico.[87]

While these arrangements were being made, fear gripped

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[86]State Department to Silliman, July 16, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 564; Silliman to State Department, July 19, 1914, ibid., 566.

[87]State Department to Oliveira, July 20, 23, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 566, 568; Oliveira to State Department, July 22, 24, 26, 27, 1914, ibid., 567-68, 570, 572-73.

Mexico City. Oliveira reported that the Zapatistas' attacks on the suburbs had increased since Huerta's resignation. The populace feared, moreover, that the army might disband, leaving the city to the mercy of looters. Most frightening of all, the Brazilian Minister informed Washington, the city newspapers were reporting Carranza as having declared that he would "resort to reprisals and bloodshed" upon occupying the capital.[88]

With such threats weighing on his mind, on July 23, Wilson, through Silliman, warned the First Chief that the United States, hence other powers also, might withhold recognition of a government established by the Constitutionalists unless guarantees were given on several accounts. The President again demanded respect for foreign lives, property, and debt obligations. He then insisted upon a "most generous amnesty" for "political and military opponents." Recalling the depredations against the church and clergy in Zacatecas, he also insisted that there be no "unitive or vindictive action toward priests or ministers of any church, whether Catholic or Protestant."[89]

Silliman, meanwhile, had accompanied Carranza to Tampico, and Wilson's note found him in the port city. The

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[88]Oliveira to State Department, July 22, 1914, ibid., 567-68; New York Times, July 20, 1914, p. 1; ibid., July 22, 1914, p. 3; ibid., July 24, 1914, p. 5.

[89]State Department to Silliman, July 23, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 568-69.

agent must have been certain what the First Chief's response would be, because, prior to receiving it, he cabled Washington, informing the Administration of the factors that would condition the reply. Recognizing what Wilson and Bryan often chose to ignore, Silliman reminded them that the Constitutionalists were bent on social revolution. The revolutionaries, he pointed out, blamed the aristocrats and large land owners for the failure of Madero's revolutionary government. These same elements had also supported Huerta's regime. He felt certain that the rebels would insist upon punishing them. He also reported that the Constitutionalists believed that the Church and priesthood had foresaken their spiritual mission and, for their own self-interest, had allied with Huerta against the interests of the people. Severe restrictions on the activities of the Church could, therefore, be expected.[90]

Foreign Minister Fabela, in replying for the First Chief, was not as explicit as Silliman had been, but his message was clear. He promised that the lives and property of foreigners would be "protected in the future as they have been in the past." As for the other points in Wilson's note, Fabela declared that they would be "decided according to the best interests of justice and our national

[90]Silliman to State Department, July 27, 1914/12634.

interests."[91] But Wilson was just as unyielding as Carranza. He directed Silliman to remind the First Chief that "our advice offered, and everything in out telegram of the 23d, cannot be modified nor can we recede from it in the least. . . ." He further warned that without recognition from the United States, a Constitutionalist government "could obtain no loans and must speedily break down."[92]

Such threats from the President of the United States might have deterred a lesser man, but Carranza calmly proceeded to arrange the surrender of Mexico City on his own terms. He was careful enough, however, not to cut off his lines of communication with Washington. Silliman was accorded every courtesy. He attended all social functions with the First Chief. Fabela introduced him to the crowds in flattering terms, while President Wilson was toasted as the friend of the Constitutionalists.[93]

The agent soon discovered that this courtesy did not include a voice in arranging a peace with the Federals. Determined that the Federal representatives should come in to him on his own terms, Carranza, when he discovered that

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[91]Fabela to Silliman, July 27, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 575.

[92]State Department to Silliman, July 31, 1914, ibid., 576-77.

[93]Silliman to State Department, July 23, 25, 26, 1914/ 12519, 12619, 12620; New York Times, July 24, 1914, p. 5.

they were on their way to Tampico, refused to meet them at the port city and insisted that they adhere to his original proposal by meeting in Saltillo. Reporters who accompanied Carbajal's representatives were turned back at Tampico, while the representatives themselves were herded aboard a military train like prisoners of war and whisked incognito to Monterrey. Dumped from the train with no directions, they attempted to persuade Consul Hanna to escort them to the Texas border; but he persuaded them to press on to Saltillo.[94]

When Silliman discovered that the envoys had arrived in Saltillo, he offered to help them arrange an interview with Carranza. As it turned out, the envoys' secretary, Salvador Urbina, was an old friend of Cabrera and Fabela. These two, then, arranged for Urbina to meet with the First Chief and establish a time for a formal conference. Carranza insisted that Villar and Gutiérrez Allende first meet with two of his own underlings to determine if they were prepared to discuss peace on his terms. When it became apparent that they wanted assurances that certain officials of the Huerta regime would be given amnesty, Carranza broke off the conferences before they really began. Now more fearful for their own safety than ever, the Federalist commissioners asked Silliman to escort

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[94]Hanna to State Department, August 1, 1914/12704; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 51-52.

them to the United States, but the First Chief insisted that they return the way they came. Silliman then could do no more than provide them with enough money to pay their return fares to Tampico.[95]

Failing to secure an unconditional surrender agreement from Carbajal, and determined to personally supervise the siege of Mexico City, Carranza, accompanied by Silliman, departed from Saltillo on August 6. While they journeyed southward, the Brazilian Minister worked feverishly to prevent the destruction of the beautiful city. By the time Carranza was nearing Obregón's headquarters at Teoloyucán, Cardoso de Oliveira met with Obregón and Silliman, who had hastened ahead of the First Chief in order to be at the conference. Soon joined by Carranza, the Constitutionalist leaders again refused to make any accommodation with Carbajal; but they did agree to a formula for the peaceful occupation of the capital. By the terms of this agreement and another made the following day between Obregón and representatives of the Federal Army, Carbajal resigned and fled to Vera Cruz, the Federal Army evacuated the city piecemeal, and the Constitutionalist army took its place. On August 15, the occupation was peacefully accomplished as Eduardo Iturbide, Governor of the Federal District, turned over to Obregón

[95]Silliman to State Department, August 1, 2, 3 (two), 4 (two), 1914/12700, 12716, 12721, 12727, 12733, 12746, 12735.

control of the capital city's police force. With both Silliman and Canova on hand, Carranza made his grand and triumphal entry into the city on the 20th.[96]

The Constitutionalists were triumphant. Silliman thought it a most encouraging sign for future cordial relations with the Constitutionalists the fact that when he entered the city alone on August 18, with the stars and stripes fluttering on a make-shift staff connected to the front bumper of his automobile, the Constitutionalist soldiers stood and cheered as he passed.[97] But Mexico's problems were not solved and more troubled times lay ahead. Pancho Villa was noticeably absent from the coterie of generals that surrounded the First Chief during his impressive entry into Mexico City. The strong man from Chihuahua was not one to be slighted. Nor was the Puritan in the White House one to be ignored. Together, these two, with the help of the special agents, were to seek their own solution for Mexico's problems.

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[96]Oliveira to State Department, August 8, 9 (two), 12, 13 (two), 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 582-86; Silliman to State Department, August 13, 20, 1914, ibid., 586-88; El Sol (Mexico City), August 18, 1914; New York Times, August 12, 13, 1914, p. 9; ibid., August 16, 1914, II, p. 8; ibid., August 21, 1914, p. 10.

[97]Silliman to State Department, August 18, 1914, NA 125.8276/15.

CHAPTER IX

SEARCHING FOR THE RIGHT COMBINATION

In Washington it appeared by mid-August, 1914, that the demise of Huerta had only contributed to the rise of another caudillo—Carranza. As the armies of Obregon and Gonzalez approached Mexico City, the First Chief had them arrayed so as to prevent either Villa or Zapata from sharing in the triumph or challenging his authority in the national capital. After occupying the city, he made no move to create a more representative provisional government. He was contemptuous of the foreign colony and the diplomatic corps.[1] State Department agent Leon Canova described the scenes as the Carrancistas, either by military tribunal or outright murder, began eliminating their enemies in the capital. The generals occupied the sumptuous mansions on the most exclusive boulevards and avenues, while their soldiers were allowed to seize their own booty.[2] "Soldiers openly state they were promised

[1]Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 58-62; Womack, Zapata, 194; Francisco Ramírez Plancarte, La Ciudad de México durante La Revolución Constitucionalista (México, D.F.: Ediciones Botas, 1941), 70-71.

[2]Canova to State Department, August 25, 26, 27, 1914/ 13129, 13013, 13020.

loot," Canova reported, "and they want it now."[3] Wilson looked southward at the situation that he had helped to create and decided that still more changes were in order.

The President's plans began to evolve well before Carranza's armies occupied Mexico City, and they were initiated by Pancho Villa. In late July reports from northern Mexico and the border indicated that Villa was busy recruiting men, confiscating everything he could get his hands on, and arranging to sell the goods in the United States. The reports also indicated that he was buying large quantities of arms, dynamite, and fuel in the United States and smuggling it into Mexico.[4] With only other revolutionary armies to fight, Villa's military preparations seemed ominous. Any southward advance might bring him into conflict with Obregón or González.

Actually Villa did not contemplate warfare except as a last resort. On about July 25, he called in his friend, State Department Agent George Carothers, outlined his future plans, and urged the American to go to Washington and personally explain the situation to President Wilson. Zach Cobb, who had great faith in Carothers' ability to direct Villa's energies into constructive channels, urged

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[3]Canova to State Department, August 29, 1914/13039.

[4]Bliss to War Department, July 20, 1914/12559; Cobb to State Department, July 24, 1914/12601; Letcher to State Department, July 25, 1914/12614.

that the Chihuahua strong man's request be honored. Accordingly, on July 28, Bryan directed Carothers first to secure Villa's pledge to maintain the peace in his absence, then come at once to Washington. Having already secured such a pledge, Carothers departed from El Paso the next day.[5] At this stage he was as much the agent of Pancho Villa as the agent of the United States.

Bryan had another reason to confer with Carothers; namely, the persistent charges of his misconduct while serving the Department. Although Bryan had been inclined to pass off as Carrancista propaganda the earlier charges leveled by the León Brothers, he could not ignore similar claims made by Special Agent Canova. As part of his duties, Canova had made inquiries into the Carothers-Villa relationship. His confidential reports to Bryan were devastating. "Since I have been in Mexico," he wrote in late July, "I have heard him (Carothers) described as a 'crook,' 'blackmailer,' 'gambler,' and 'woman-chaser.'" Canova insisted that it was an "accepted fact" that while Carothers "is Special Agent of the State Department, he represents Villa with far greater zeal." Carothers' "zeal" could be accounted for, Canova explained,

[5]Carothers to State Department, July 27, 1914, NA 125. 36582/101, 102; State Department to Carothers, ibid./101; Cobb to State Department, July 27, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 58; El Paso Morning Times, July 28, 1914; El Sol, July 31, 1914; El País, August 1, 1914.

by the fact that he had been given lucrative business opportunities by the Mexican general, including gambling concessions in Chihuahua and Juárez. Word also reached Canova that Carothers had made contacts in the United States, through which Villa disposed of confiscated goods, notably, large amounts of foreign-owned cotton from the Torreón district. Equally damaging, Canova reported that Carothers might be encouraging the antagonism between Villa and Carranza.[6]

Canova's informants, whom he never named, also claimed that Carothers had, indeed, taken over a cotton plantation near Torreón. The opportunity had been presented him, not by the owner, but by Villa, who had confiscated the land. Canova's informants also indicated that Carothers had arranged with J. F. Brittingham, a Gómez Palacio soap-maker, for the hacienda to be temporarily managed by one of Brittingham's associates. Brittingham had agreed to help Carothers in return for a contract to take all the plantation's cotton seed at a reduced price. Carothers' family, meanwhile, was living in Brittingham's home in Gómez Palacio. All these activities, Canova noted, reportedly allowed Carothers to "spend money like a prince."[7]

[6]Canova to Bryan, July 22, 1914, NA 111.70022/48. This report was not turned over to the Department's Index Bureau until November 14, 1916.

[7]Ibid.; Canova to Bryan, August 6, 1914/27407.

On August 1, Carothers met with the Secretary of State and was personally confronted with the charges. He categorically denied each. Describing the conference for the President, Bryan wrote that he was inclined to believe Carothers.[8] Several days later, the agent penned a memorandum for the Secretary. Again denying any wrongdoings, he insisted that he had no income except from his salary paid by the Department and that his real estate and mining properties in and around Torreón, which were valued at only 25,000 pesos, were not currently making him any income.[9] His words in his own defense may have been satisfactory, because he was returned to his duties a few days later; but more likely, Bryan and Wilson reasoned that his ability to influence Villa was an asset that overbalanced any of the debits that his alleged shady dealings might produce. Even Canova admitted that Carothers was extremely capable, that he had that "shade of dignity with a democratic spirit" that commended him so highly for his kind of work. Canova later admitted, moreover, that he had "yet to witness a single act of his (Carothers) which has not been for the good of the service."[10]

[8]Bryan to Wilson, August 2, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 254; New York Times, August 7, 1914, p. 8.

[9]Carothers to Bryan, August 11, 1914, NA 125.36582/111.

[10]Canova to Bryan, October 20, 1914/13611.

Carothers, meanwhile, held out hope for a peaceful solution to Mexico's problems. Villa's plan, as Carothers explained it to Bryan, called for the rebel general to remain in Chihuahua and increase the size of his army to 60,000. He would not interfere with Carranza in the capital, but would insist upon the convention of revolutionary generals as provided for in the Pact of Torreón. Under the formula of representation—one representative per 1000 troops—stipulated by the pact, he hoped to control half the delegates to the convention. Villa disclaimed any personal ambitions and insisted only upon a program of agrarian reform to benefit his followers. If chosen by the convention, he would accept an able civilian as provisional president but would prefer to see General Felipe Angeles, a reform-minded professional soldier who had become a close advisor, receive the office. Although the First Chief had not ratified the Pact of Torreón, Villa believed that since he had abided by parts of it, he would accept the convention, too, if the United States applied enough pressure. If Carranza refused, Carothers revealed, renewed warfare was likely.[11]

Carothers' report gave Wilson and Bryan fresh food for thought. A new avenue for influencing the revolution and, at the same time, neutralizing the power of the

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[11]Bryan to Wilson, August 2, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 254.

pugnacious First Chief seemed to be opening. Their immediate task, as they saw it after two or three days of discussion, was to insure that Villa did not engage in any hostile actions that would jeopardize the workability of his own formula. With Carothers' reputation somewhat under a cloud, they decided to send a new agent, a personal representative from the President, to appeal to Villa. They considered John Lind, but Wilson ruled him out because of the "violent prejudice" directed at him by certain representatives of the Roman Catholic Church. Instead, he chose Paul Fuller, a prominent New York attorney. "I formed a most delightful impression of Mr. Fuller," Wilson wrote to Bryan. "He is a Democrat, is full of sympathy with the purposes of the administration, and is accustomed by long habit to deal with our friends in Latin America."[12]

At age sixty-five, Paul Fuller was a frail man in poor health when he accepted the mission and had to be accompanied by his physician during his travels. He had a deep sense of responsibility to the Administration and served without salary.[13] His parents being Forty-niners, he was said to have been born aboard a clipper ship as it

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[12]Wilson to Bryan, August 5, 1914, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; copy in Bryan Papers, Box 43.

[13]The terms of Fuller's service are revealed in Bryan to Wilson, August 24, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 114.

sailed through San Francisco's Golden Gate. Orphaned by the age of ten, he had wandered eastward to New York City. There he was befriended by Charles Coubert, a French schoolteacher. After reading law and being admitted to the bar, Fuller married his benefactor's daughter and joined the old man's sons' law firm—Coubert Brothers. Through the firm, one of the most prominent in the country, Fuller made numerous international contacts and was reputed to be one of America's foremost experts on foreign law. During his career he learned Spanish and enjoyed great success in dealings with Latin American clients. It was this experience that no doubt commended him to the President. Even before his appointment he had discussed Latin American policy with the President and had been considered a prospective emissary to Santo Domingo. A possible conflict of interest prevented this appointment. A Roman Catholic, he was, perhaps, the best qualified and most able of Wilson's personal agents.[14]

At a White House conference on August 9, Wilson presumably directed his new agent to appeal to Villa to remain at peace and allow the proposed convention to establish a new government through free elections. There

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[14] Ibid.; New York Times, November 30, 1915, p. 6. Biographical data on Fuller is extremely sketchy. Most of the above information comes from his obituary. For one who was reputed to be internationally famous, his name rarely appeared in the newspapers and does not appear at all in the popular biographical registers.

is no record of their convention, but Fuller's reports indicated that this was the primary concern of his mission. They also reveal that Fuller was probably instructed to either confirm or refute Carothers' overwhelmingly favorable impressions of Villa. Departing immediately for the border, the new agent bore a personal letter from Wilson asking Villa to explain his hopes for the future of Mexico.[15]

When Fuller arrived in El Paso on August 12, he was greeted by Zach Cobb, who promptly introduced the New Yorker to the local Villista leaders. Since Villa's whereabouts were uncertain at the time, the local chieftain, General Juan Medina, in order to avoid delay, decided to escort the envoy south, while others attempted to locate their leader. Arriving in Chihuahua on the 14th, the party was informed that Villa was in an inaccessible village hundreds of miles away. Only after two days of constant attempts at telegraphic communication was Villa reached and

[15]Since there is no copy available, Wilson must have prepared the letter to Villa on his own portable typewriter. The content of the letter, as in the case of Fuller's instructions, must be inferred from the information in Fuller's report and Villa's return letter to Wilson. See Fuller, Memorandum for the President, August 20, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 114; Villa to Wilson, August 18, 1914, ibid. The New York World, August 18, 1914, wildly exaggerated the purpose of Fuller's mission, claiming that he had been sent to warn Villa that American troops would march inland from Vera Cruz if he and Carranza fought over the occupation of Mexico City. Fuller was supposedly to warn Villa to keep away from the capital.

a rendezvous arranged at Santa Rosalía, some six hours from Chihuahua by rail.[16]

The delay allowed Fuller to take the measure of Villa's subordinates, especially of General Felipe Angeles, whom Villa had marked as a candidate for provisional president. The American agent was favorably impressed. He reported that the general was "a friend of free government" and had a "warm appreciation for President Wilson's attitude." When Fuller queried Angeles about Villa's abilities, the professional soldier replied frankly that because of a lack of "early training" his chieftain was still an "incomplete man," but that he was dedicated to his followers and their welfare. Angeles insisted that Villa had no political ambitions but that Carranza did. He described the First Chief, whom he had served before joining Villa's camp, as "arbitrary and suspicious in manner and act," a potential dictator.[17]

On August 16, after suitable introductions, Fuller conferred alone with Villa. The special envoy emphasized that Wilson desired Villa to avoid any armed conflict with Carranza's forces that might ruin the chances of the early formation of a constitutional government. After expressing

[16]Cobb to State Department, August 13, 14, 1914/12844, 12851; Fuller, Memorandum for the President, August 20, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 114.

[17]Ibid.; Fuller to State Department, August 17, 1914, ibid.

a like desire, Villa warned that it might not be possible if Carranza continued to consolidate all political power into his own hands. He also expressed fear that the United States or some other foreign power, in order to protect its private interests in Mexico, might encourage this trend by extending diplomatic recognition to the First Chief's provisional government. Sensing that he had found a bargaining point, Fuller, half asking and half demanding, told Villa: "If recognition should be withheld . . . you will be held responsible for the preservation of peace throughout Norther Mexico." In all apparent sincerity, Villa accepted the responsibility.[18]

Fuller than inquired into the authenticity of a statement attributed to Villa, and recently published in the El Paso Times, in which the general supposedly declared that military men should not serve in the elected government and that agrarian reform should be accomplished by constitutional means. When Villa acknowledged that he had made the statement, Fuller asked the general to set forth in writing the objectives of his followers. Villa promised to prepare a statement before the agent departed.[19]

The next day Fuller joined Villa and several of his advisors in the general's private rail car for a return

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

trip to Chihuahua. In a relaxed atmosphere, the revolutionaries opened up and explained their fears and ambitions. Again Villa disclaimed any ambitions save to promote the welfare of his men. In order to insure justice for the common people, he and his subordinates insisted that all inequalities in the law must be eliminated. Insisting that he was forced into outlawry because he had defended his sister's virtue against the carnal lusts of a rich land-owner, Villa claimed to be just one of many victims of such inequalities. The Villistas also insisted upon land reform, claiming that the land would not be confiscated but that compensation would be made. But above all they seemed to want a government which would be more truly representative of all the people.[20]

Inevitably the group got around to discussing Carranza. The consensus was that the strained relations between the revolutionary factions resulted primarily from a lack of trust on the part of the First Chief. They cited as an example the conduct of the Zacatecas campaign. Carranza's lack of trust in the Division of the North had needlessly cost the Constitutionalists hundreds of lives and had created hostility between the Villistas and the Carrancistas. Fuller then asked if it might be advisable for him to go to Mexico City and, in behalf of

[20]Fuller, Memorandum for the President, August 20, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 114.

peace, make similar representations to Carranza. Unanimously the Villistas replied that he should.[21]

In Chihuahua on August 18, Villa presented Fuller with a lengthy memorandum for President Wilson, outlining the desires of his faction. The preamble might have been penned by Wilson himself: "The principal aspiration of the Division of the North . . . is the establishment of a democratic government, elected freely and without official pressure. . . ." Neither the First Chief nor his Plan of Guadalupe, the document continued, held out such guarantees. The Division of the North, nonetheless, conceded that it would accept a provisional government, even if headed by Carranza, provided that he was not eligible for the elective presidency. As a guarantee for elections, the Division of the North was to remain intact. Fuller added his own penciled comments to Villa's memorandum. If Carranza followed his Plan of Guadalupe and became provisional president, Fuller scribbled, he would become ineligible for the constitutional presidency. By his own declaration, Villa, a military leader, was also ineligible. Thus, if all bargains were kept, neither should despair that his chief antagonist would rule the country.[22]

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Villa to Wilson, August 18, 1914/27437; English translation in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 114.

Taking his leave, Fuller made two additional appeals to Villa: that there should be no vindictive treatment of the defeated and that the Catholic Church, its priests and property, be treated with justice. By special train, Fuller then traveled to El Paso, where he boarded another train for the east coast. He apparently intended to go to his home in New York and report by mail, but while en route, he received a wire from Bryan directing him to come directly to Washington.[23]

While journeying eastward, Fuller set forth his impressions in a lengthy memorandum. Villa, he reminisced, was "an unusually quiet man, gentle in manner, low voiced, slow of speech, earnest and occasionally emotional in expression but always subdued with an undercurrent of sadness." He also noted that the rebel chieftain showed "no outward manifestation of vanity or self-sufficiency, is conscious of his own shortcomings. . . ." Fuller formed no less favorable impressions of Villa's subordinates. He admired their frankness, apparent sincerity and dedication, and willingness to accept guidance from the United States. His written report could hardly have been more

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[23]Fuller, Memorandum for the President, August 20, 1914, ibid.; State Department to Fuller aboard Train 22, Manhattan Limited, Pennsylvania Railroad, August 21, 1914/ 12959a; New York Times, August 20, 1914, p. 7.

complimentary to the Villistas.[24]

While Fuller was in Santa Rosalía, Carothers rejoined Villa. Fuller's report indicates that the State Department agent did not attempt to exert any influence in favor of Villa. Instead he traveled alone in his own private car and did not enter into the discussions. Villa, however, did praise Carothers. The agent, he insisted, was an honest, straightforward man who never hesitated to speak his mind, no matter what the consequences. Those who charged that Carothers was trying to feather his nest through him, declared Villa, should come forward with some proof.[25]

If Wilson did not share this view, he still saw the Carothers-Villa relationship as an advantage to be exploited. The President had planned to meet with the special agent and discuss his work, but the grave illness of Mrs. Wilson prevented him from doing so. Thus, Carothers never met President Wilson.[26] He returned to Villa's side bearing instructions to make representations similar to those already made by Fuller.[27] But future

[24]Fuller, Memorandum for the President, August 20, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 114.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Bryan to Wilson, August 2, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 254; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1771.

[27]State Department to Carothers, August 11, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 584.

events indicated that his mission involved much more: through Villa, the promotion of a provisional government that would neutralize Carranza's power.

Conditions in the State of Sonora offered Carothers an opportunity. Back from his self-imposed exile, Governor José M. Maytorena had rebelled against Carranza's attempt to impose a new government on his state. Maytorena soon besieged Carranza's forces, commanded by Colonel Plutarco Elías Calles, in the border hamlet of Naco. During the fighting, shots from the attackers rained on the American side of the border. At the same time, Americans and other foreigners in Sonora were complaining about the daily depredations committed by the Yaqui Indians, who made up the bulk of Maytorena's troops.[28]

Fuller had spoken to Villa about the Sonora disturbance, and the rebel general had promised to do all he could to promote peace.[29] Carothers, however, was specifically charged with the responsibility of pressuring Villa to arrange a peace settlement.[30] Accordingly, on

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[28]Frederick Simpich, American Consul, Nogales, to State Department, August 15, 18, 19, 23, 24, 1914/12875, 12913, 12937, 12968, 12984; El Paso Morning Times, August 15-24, 1914.

[29]Fuller, Memorandum for the President, August 20, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 114.

[30]State Department to Carothers, August 13, 1914/12836.

about August 20 or 21, Villa invited General Obregón, whose home state was Sonora, to join him and aid in mediating the differences between Maytorena and Calles. Accepting the invitation with Carranza's permission, Obregón left Mexico City on August 21 to join Villa in Chihuahua.[31] Was the invitation to Obregón the fruit of Villa's mind or was it proposed by Carothers as part of a plan to check Carranza? The records do not reveal concrete answers to this question. One thing is certain: regardless of the origin of the invitation, Villa had more than peace in Sonora on his mind when he extended it.

The Villa-Obregón conferences went smoothly from the beginning. From Chihuahua Carothers reported that he believed the two generals would "act in accord. Conditions look favorable to me."[32] Travel to Nogales, where the conference with Maytorena was to be held, was very difficult because no rail line crossed northern Mexico from Chihuahua to Sonora. By appealing to General Pershing and Custom's Collector Cobb, Villa's officials in Juárez arranged for the Mexican generals to use the American rail line between El Paso and Nogales.[33]

[31]Canova to State Department, August 21, 22, 1914/12959, 12960.

[32]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, August 26, 1914/13003.

[33]Bliss to War Department, August 23, 1914, NA 812.2311/138; Cobb to State Department, August 25, 1914, ibid./153.

Exuberant Villa partisans almost sabatoged the whole proceedings. While Cobb was busy arranging a smooth passage for the two generals, the Villistas persuaded General Pershing to publicly greet them when they arrived in El Paso. While Pershing was most courteous, some of the Villistas staged a pro-Villa demonstration that was obviously intended to deride Obregón. Showing no resentment, Obregón remained cordial and continued with Villa to Nogales. Delayed temporarily, Carothers arrived in El Paso after the incident and was greatly disturbed when he discovered what had happened. In a jointly prepared telegram, he and Cobb recommended that since more demonstrations might have an adverse effect on the existing rapport between Villa and Obregón, on the return trip they should not stop in El Paso for a banquet being planned in their honor.[34]

Early in the morning of August 28, Villa and Carothers went to Nogales, Sonora, to confer with Maytorena, while Obregón, somewhat apprehensive of the attitude of the governor and his followers, remained on the Arizona side and breakfasted with his fiance, who had come to meet him. Later that day, after Villa and Carothers had arranged a

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[34]Cobb to State Department, August 26, 1914, ibid./149; Cobb (joint telegram with Carothers) to State Department, August 27, 1914, ibid./157; Carothers to State Department, August 27, 1914/13018; Cobb to Bryan, personal, August 29, 1914/27428; El Paso Morning Times, August 27, 1914.

tentative agreement, Obregón joined the conference, and the three revolutionary leaders, aided by the American agent, hammered out the final agreement for the pacification of northwestern Mexico. Despite Carothers' efforts to prevent it, Villa's partisans continued to slight Obregón. Throughout the proceedings, however, Obregón conducted himself like a statesman.[35]

On their return trip to El Paso, Villa and Obregón asked Carothers to secure permission for General Pershing to join them on the Mexican side of the border. Although wanting to avoid the possibility of further incidents, Carothers dutifully acceded to request the meeting. For one reason or another, possibly at the request of the State Department, the War Department had already ordered Pershing not to meet again with the two Mexican generals.[36] Instead, when they arrived back in El Paso, Cobb had contrived to have identical telegrams of commendation from Secretary Bryan presented to them.[37]

[35]Carothers to State Department, August 28, 1914, NA 812.2311/160; Carothers to State Department, August 30, 1914/13042; Tucson Daily Citizen, August 28, 29, 1914; El Paso Morning Times, August 30, 1914; Guzmán, Memoirs of Pancho Villa, 293-304; Alvaro Obregón, Ocho mil kilómetros en campaña (México, D.F.: Librería de la Vda. de Ch. Bouret, 1917), 266.

[36]Carothers to State Department, September 1, 1914, NA 812.2311/165; Adjutant General's Office to Commanding General, Southern Department, August 31, 1914, ibid./169.

[37]Cobb to State Department, August 30, 1914 and State Department to Cobb, September 1, 1914/13043.

The American Customs Collector later reported that the notes relieved much of the embarrassment which might have resulted from the cancellation of the festivities that had been scheduled in the generals' honor.[38]

Bryan and Wilson must have been heartened by a return note from Obregón thanking the Administration for its interest in Mexico and aid in establishing peace.[39] Carothers saw encouraging signs for the future. "Villa and Obregón are working in harmony and friendship," he wired the Secretary of State.[40] More prone to emotional expressions, Cobb wrote to Bryan that the Villa-Obregón relationship had taken on the "effect of a love feast . . . ."[41] He also praised Carothers, claiming that the rapprochement between the generals was largely the result of his efforts.[42]

Carothers continued to shepherd the two generals, returning with them to Chihuahua. There his efforts paid more dividends. Villa and Obregón expanded their

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[38]Cobb to State Department, September 1, 1914/13065; copy in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 62.

[39]Obregón to Cobb (for Bryan), September 1, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 593.

[40]Carothers to State Department, September 1, 1914/13063.

[41]Cobb to Bryan, personal, August 29, 1914/27428.

[42]Cobb to State Department, September 1, 1914/13065; copy in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 62.

discussion to include measures to prevent further revolutionary discord and promote a government acceptable to all factions. On September 3, they agreed to a nine-point program that was essentially the same as the one Villa had outlined in the memorandum which Fuller took to Washington. Although Obregón was a loyal Carrancista, he agreed with the wisdom of the First Chief becoming provisional president, thus eliminating him from the elective presidency. The Villa-Obregón agreement also called for the revolutionary convention as provided for in the Pact of Torreón. They agreed upon provisions for free elections and the conclusion that military men should not be eligible for civil offices.[43] Whether by contrivance or pure coincidence, a Villa-Obregón axis had seemingly emerged.

After remaining in Chihuahua for several days to solidify his friendship with Villa, Obregón asked Carothers to return with him to Mexico City. Carothers interpreted the invitation as more evidence of Obregón's cordiality toward Villa and the United States. Sensing that Carothers' acceptance of the invitation would lend an aura of American support to the recently negotiated pact, Villa also urged the agent to go to Mexico City.

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[43] Cobb to State Department, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 62; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 69-70; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, II, 67-70.

Bryan was only too pleased to grant permission.[44] Things were beginning to fall in place. Villa and Obregón had expressed a desire for peace and representative government. If their coalition was maintained, Carranza would be checked.

Paul Fuller, meanwhile, had returned to Washington, submitted his report and Villa's memorandum, and agreed to go to Mexico City to meet with Carranza. Again no written instructions may be found, but several months later Fuller confided the nature of his mission to a group of friends. "He stated confidentailly," recalled Chandler P. Anderson, a special assistant in the State Department, "that the object of his mission was conciliation and mediation between hostile elements, directed chiefly to bringing about a convention which would place Villa in control."[45] Fuller's mission, then, complimented Carothers' and vice versa.

By this time the character of Carranza's regime in Mexico City had emerged. The diplomatic corps had been so harassed that most of the emissaries had left the

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[44] Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, September 4, 1914/13111; State Department to Carothers, September 7, 1914, ibid.

[45] Diary of Chandler P. Anderson, February 20, 1915, Papers and Diaries of Chandler P. Anderson, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress, Box 21.

capital.[46] Relations between Carranza and Zapata were even more strained. Resentful that Carranza had deployed troops to prevent the entry of other revolutionaries into the capital, Zapata was abusive to envoys sent into his territory by the First Chief. He absolutely refused to compromise with the Carrancistas, insisting, instead, that they pay homage to his Plan of Ayala or be prepared to fight.[47]

On returning to Mexico, Fuller, this time accompanied by his wife, journeyed to Galveston by rail where he caught a steamer to Vera Cruz. Arriving on September 4, he was met by Silliman and Isidro Fabela, Carranza's Foreign Minister. En route to the capital, the special envoy conferred with Fabela. He suggested to the Foreign Minister that the duration of the revolutionary interim government should be short and that early provision should be made for free elections. Fabela scoffed at this suggestion, insisting that the interim government could carry out reforms more efficiently. When the American agent replied that only the elected representatives of all the people should presume to inaugurate

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[46] Silliman to State Department, August 21, 25, 1914/12961, 12985; Oliveira to State Department, August 25, 1914/12990.

[47] Silliman to State Department, August 28, 1914/13033; Canova to State Department, September 1, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 592-93; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 63-66; Womack, Zapata, 203-10.

reforms, Fabela insisted that elections would take time and that a legislature would debate for months. Such delays would only lead to renewed rebellions. The best way to insure tranquility in Mexico, he contended, was for the United States to extend diplomatic recognition to the interim government and, thus, invest it with an official nature. If the elected representatives of the people wanted to change the policies adopted by the interim government, they could do so later.[48]

Abruptly, Fabela changed the subject. He urged that the American troops be withdrawn from Vera Cruz. President Wilson, he reminded Fuller, had declared that the invasion was directed only at Huerta, yet the troops remained. He claimed that the Mexican people were unified in their desire to see the Americans leave. Then he claimed that the apparent signs of dissension among his people were misleading. He maintained that most of the governors and generals were devotedly loyal to Carranza. Zapata, he noted, was an exception. He also admitted that force might be necessary to subdue the revolutionaries of the South.[49]

The regimen in Mexico City had abated somewhat by the time of Fuller's arrival. Taking steps to quiet the

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[48] Fuller, Memorandum for the President, September 18, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 117.

[49] Ibid.

criticism of his arbitrary rule, on September 5, Carranza issued a call for a junta of Constitutionalist governors and generals to meet in the capital on October 1. His action was prompted no doubt by rumors of growing accord between Obregón and Villa, who were still conferring in Chihuahua. At any rate, Fuller thought the proposed junta an encouraging step and commended the First Chief when they met later that same day. But he also reminded Carranza that President Wilson desired the early establishment of a constitutional government.[50]

In reply, the First Chief, echoing Fabela, claimed that an interim military government was necessary for institutional reforms. He blamed meddling by the United States for much of the disunity among the revolutionary factions. Denying that this was the intention of his President, Fuller offered to promote unity. He suggested that President Wilson address a note to Zapata through Silliman, urging him to renew negotiations with the Constitutionalists and notifying him that his refusal to do so would displease the United States. Carranza was caught off guard by Fuller's counterplay. At first he hedged, suggesting that he could not ask an alien to restore internal order in Mexico, but under Fabela's

[50] Ibid.; Fuller to State Department, September 5, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 594; Silliman to State Department, September 5, 1914/13119; El Liberal (Mexico City), September 5, 6, 1914.

prodding he acceded to the proposal. Fuller then promptly wired Bryan, requesting that the overture be made to Zapata. Two days later, Silliman received instructions to do so.[51]

On September 7, while Fuller was still in Mexico City, Obregón, accompanied by Carothers and two of Villa's aids, returned from Chihuahua. The Villistas, both of whom Fuller had met earlier, searched him out and explained the agreement their chief had made with Obregón. They were fearful that Carranza would not accept it and asked Fuller to intercede. The New Yorker also discussed the pact with Obregón, who was just as reticent to assure the First Chief's acceptance.[52]

Turning next to the First Chief, Fuller urged acceptance of the Villa-Obregón agreement. He told Carranza that the pact was "in consonance with the views" of President Wilson and that "its early realization would enlist the sympathy and approval" of the United States. Carranza gave no reply; instead, he took up the question of the evacuation of Vera Cruz. Again wielding a deft

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[51]Fuller, Memorandum for the President, September 18, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 117; Fuller to State Department, September 5, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 594; State Department to Silliman, September 7, 1914, ibid.

[52]Fuller, Memorandum for the President, September 18, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 117; Fuller to State Department, September 8, 1914/13133.

hand at diplomacy, Fuller inquired: "To what organized government could we make any transfer of so important a port. . . ?" There was currently "not even a provisional government in existence," he continued, "but only a revolutionary body in military occupation of the capital. . . ." Fuller then indicated that when a satisfactory provisional government was established, he was certain that President Wilson would be most willing to evacuate Vera Cruz.[53]

Carranza was enraged. He took out his wrath on Silliman, who had accompanied Fuller but had lingered behind in an attempt to sooth the First Chief. Turning on the weaker of the two agents, he told Silliman that unless he had authority to negotiate the evacuation of Vera Cruz, he should leave the country with Fuller. His rage intensifying, he complained that he was tired of dealing with envoys who were supposedly clothed with authority to discuss important international questions yet did nothing but delve into Mexico's internal affairs.[54] Silliman was so intimidated by Carranza's outburst that he was reluctant to even pursue attempts to bring the First Chief and Zapata together.[55]

The Carrancistas were not in the least cowed by

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[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Silliman to State Department, September 12, 1914/13166.

Fuller. The day after his encounter with the First Chief, the special agent dined with Fabela and the Carranza's private secretary, Gustavo Espinoza. Fuller expressed dismay at the revolutionaries' vengeful attitude toward officials of the defunct Huerta regime. He suggested that some distinction should be made between those who had definitely committed crimes and those who had done their duty as they saw it. Both Fabela and Espinoza insisted that no such distinction would be made, that it would only encourage those who might be treated with leniency to again plot against legally constituted authority. Fuller came away from the meeting with the impression that, unless their power was curbed, the Carrancistas would make "proscription and confiscation . . . a settled policy."[56]

Just as Villa had done, before Fuller departed, Carranza presented the agent with a letter for President Wilson. The letters, however, differed greatly. Villa's had been lengthy and cordial and had urged the United States to aid in promoting peace in Mexico. It had also outlined a plan for the creation of a new government. Carranza's letter was short and businesslike. It only notified Wilson that Rafael Zubarán Capmany, the

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[56]Fuller, Memorandum for the President, September 18, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 117; El Liberal, September 10, 1914.

Constitutionalist agent in Washington, had been directed to immediately pursue negotiations leading to the evacuation of Vera Cruz.[57]

En route to Washington, Fuller prepared a lengthy memorandum describing the Carrancistas and his relations with them. As might be expected, he had little of a complimentary nature to report. "Fabela I consider a retrograde influence," he wrote. "Carranza impressed me as a man of good intentions but without any sufficient force to dominate his petty surroundings, and greatly hampered by the fear of lowering his prestige which hinders him from adopting conciliating measures or correcting mistakes. . . ." He suggested, moreover, that the only apparent solution to Mexico's difficulties lay in adherence to a plan such as proposed by Villa and Obregón. Significantly, he suggested that further bloodshed was preferable to allowing Mexico to return to pre-revolutionary conditions, which, by implication, he indicated might result if Carranza's rule continued unrestricted.[58]

It is difficult to surmise with certainty what Fuller said to Wilson when they met privately in late September, but a reporter who claimed to know suggested that the

[57]Ibid.; Carranza to Wilson, September 7, 1914, ibid., Box 116.

[58]Fuller, Memorandum for the President, September 18, 1914, ibid., Box 117.

agent warned that Carranza could never restore order to his country.[59] Certainly there is no reason to think that his verbal report was any less critical than his written memorandum. After making his report, Fuller returned to his law practice and did not visit Mexico again. But he remained a close associate to the President and, from time to time, was called upon to give advice on Latin American affairs.

On September 9, prospects for cooperation among the revolutionary factions were given another boost by Obregón. Attempting to enlist Carranza's support in forming a new provisional government as provided for in his agreement with Villa, Obregón issued a public appeal for American withdrawal from Vera Cruz. He also urged Villa to do the same, and Villa accommodated his newly found friend in the Carrancista camp by replying that he would lend his support to such an appeal.[60] Hoping to abet this budding revolutionary unity, Wilson directed Silliman to ask Carranza to designate "responsible officials" to whom the port might be surrendered. Receiving the

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[59] New York World, November 14, 1914, cited in Link, Struggle For Neutrality, 248.

[60] Silliman (enclosing Obregón to Villa, September 9, 1914) to State Department, September 11, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 595; Silliman (enclosing Villa to Obregón, September 9, 1914), to State Department, September 12, 1914, ibid., 596; El Liberal, September 9, 10, 1914.

President's note on September 15, Silliman, with a dramatic flare, delayed delivering the message until the 16th, the anniversary of Mexican independence.[61] At almost the same time, Silliman reported discouraging news to Washington. Carranza and Zapata, he cabled, were hopelessly rent, and there seemed to be little hope of averting armed conflict between the two. Having discussed the situation with Carothers, who was then in the capital, Silliman also revealed that Villa would probably not approve of an attack on Zapata.[62]

Zapata now appeared to be the fly in the ointment. Of all the revolutionary leaders, the Wilson Administration had had the fewest contacts with Zapata. Even those contacts had proved unsatisfactory. Indeed, the circumstances surrounding the attempts were, to say the least, bizarre. To fully understand them, moreover, we must digress several months to March, 1914, when Hubert L. Hall first appeared in Vera Cruz and attempted to arrange contacts between the Zapatistas and John Lind.

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[61] State Department to Oliveira, September 15, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 598; Silliman to State Department, September 16, 1914, ibid.; Silliman to Carranza, September 15, 1914, AGRE, L-E-861, Leg. 5. Wilson's proposal to withdraw the troops from Vera Cruz was made in good faith. The same day he addressed the note to Silliman, he also discussed with Secretary of War Garrison plans for the evacuation. See Garrison to Bryan, September 15, 1914/ 13225.

[62] Silliman to State Department, September 14, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 596.

A Morman, Hall was a New Englander by birth, but had lived more than twenty years in Mexico. For a time he was a hotel proprietor in Cuernavaca. After the Zapatistas occupied the city, the hotel business was no longer profitable, so he turned to other pursuits. When the agrarian reform program of the Madero Administration floundered, Hall and several businessmen of Mexican nationality attempted to organize a program of their own. The plan, which was to dominate Hall's thinking for years to come, was to borrow enough capital from the national agricultural bank, La Caja de Prestamos, to purchase land for a colony, then sell shares on easy terms to the landless. Unable to secure the loan, Hall's colonizing plans were temporarily abandoned.[63] How he sustained himself thereafter is a mystery.

Hall never blamed Zapata for his losses. Rather he blamed the oppressive conditions in Morelos which had spawned the revolution. In fact, he became absolutely enamored of Zapata. His devotion to the revolutionary leader of the South made him prey for a huckster named

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[63]Hall to Bryan, May 21, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 109; Womack, Zapata, 236-37. Hall claimed that Jorge Vera Estañol and Alberto García Granados, both government officials and well-known throughout Mexico, were among the backers of his colonizing scheme. La Caja de Prestamos was created in 1908, during the Díaz regime, to underwrite privately sponsored reclamation and irrigation projects such as Hall's. See González Ramírez, El Problema Agrario, 171-73.

Jacobo Ramos Martínez.[64] Bearing falsified credentials which granted him sole authority to represent Zapata to officials of the United States, Ramos Martínez contacted the gullible Morman sometime in February or March, 1914, and asked him to serve as intermediary between himself and John Lind, who was still in Vera Cruz. Since Ramos Martínez claimed to be seeking arms and supplies for Zapata, Hall, anxious to help, made the contact. Although distrusting the Zapatistas, Lind, willing to embrace any scheme that would hasten the fall of Huerta, swallowed Ramos Martínez's bait, as did Arnold Shanklin, the American Consul General in Mexico City. Since he claimed that he was in constant danger, a system of code names was adopted by the conspirators to shield Ramos Martínez and preserve the secrecy of the plot to aid Zapata.[65]

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[64]Ramos Martínez had been Lieutenant Governor of Morelos during the Madero Administration. Hall may or may not have known him at that time. Ramos Martínez's relations with Zapata at that time were not cordial. See Womack, Zapata, 141.

[65]Lind to State Department, March 23, 1914/20609-1/2; draft in Lind Papers, Box 3; copy of Shanklin to Lind, April 1, 1914, Buckley Papers, File no. 233. The first cited letter is one of many dealing with Hall filed under that document number. In all there are over 300 pages of correspondence, mostly from Hall to the State Department, plus newspaper articles and pamphlets. One cannot read Hall's correspondence without being struck by the depths of his devotion to Zapata and the people of Morelos.

One can only conjecture how Buckley secured a copy of the second cited letter. He may have gotten it from Consul Canada of Vera Cruz. Canada and Buckley were of like mind in being critical of Wilson's Mexican policy. The consul resented Lind's clandestined relationships with the revolutionaries. So that Canada could understand the

Since the whole plot began to emerge only days before Lind's departure from Mexico, the Minnesotan was not able to see it through. On the eve of his departure, Hall appeared in Vera Cruz a second time. This time he was accompanied by Ramos Martínez, who, claiming to be in great danger, pleaded for asylum. Before Lind could arrange it, his ship sailed for home. When Consul Canada of Vera Cruz expressed doubt that asylum was in order, Ramos Martínez hastily departed the city, claiming that he had been dealt with in bad faith. Before leaving, however, he persuaded Hall to go to Washington in his place. Hall, being an American, had little trouble in securing funds for his passage from Canada.[66]

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code and relay to Washington messages from Ramos Martínez, Lind conveyed a copy of this letter to the consul before departing from Vera Cruz. See copy of Lind to Canada, April 5, 1914, ibid. The code names of those involved in the conspiracy were as follows: Lind-"Juárez", Shanklin-"Paz", Ramos Martínez-"Brady", and Hall-"Clark." Although Zapata was not a party to the conspiracy, he was given the code name "Dix." Since correspondence in the State Department files reveals that these code names were utilized by the correspondents, the copies of the letters in the Buckley Papers appear to be authentic.

[66] Ibid.; Lind to State Department, April 6 (two), 1914/11409, 11415; Canada to State Department, April 9, 17, 1914/11457, 11539; State Department to Canada, April 13, 16, 1914/11457, 11539; Shanklin to Lind, April 11, 12, 1914/27474. Bryan ultimately approved his asylum request, but Ramos Martínez refused to accept it unless Consul General Shanklin accompanied him to the United States. Bryan would not approve this request.

In Washington, Hall impressed State Department officials with his sincerity and quickly won their confidence. Until his appearance in Washington, Wilson and Bryan had given scant attention to the revolution in southern Mexico. Appearing almost daily at the State Department, Hall attempted to fill that void. Besides his conversations with Bryan and others in the Department, he prepared a lengthy memorandum for President Wilson. In near rapturous terms, he described Zapata and the movement he led.[67] It was by far the most flattering description the Administration had yet received. Hall's accounts definitely shed new light on the revolution of the South and temporarily made the Administration more well disposed toward Zapata.[68] Still hoping to promote his colonization scheme in Mexico, Hall also met with officials of the Department of Agriculture and gathered all the information he could on the latest techniques in agricultural education, extension work, land reclamation, irrigation, and other matters. He remained in Washington all summer.[69]

[67]Hall to Bryan, May 14, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 254; copy in State Department files, 812.00/23126.

[68]Davis to Shanklin, October 22, 1914/17474.

[69]Hall describes his activities during the summer of 1914 in his voluminous correspondence. One must consult many letters in reconstructing his activities. They are too numerous to cite individually, but are all filed under document number 812.00/20609-1/2. Benjamin G. Davis, Chief Clerk of the State Department, with whom Hall conversed almost daily, also described Hall's activities. See Davis to Bryan, August 22, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 124.

When Ramos Martínez re-appeared in Vera Cruz shortly after the American invasion, the Administration was more willing than ever to discuss means of aiding Zapata. Communicating through Consul General Shanklin, who also came to Vera Cruz, the Department negotiated with the bogus Zapatista agent throughout the summer of 1914. The available evidence indicates that what he was really after was money—$20,000 to $50,000—for himself, not for Zapata. He tried to extort it from the State Department, but Bryan was willing to supply Zapata only with arms and supplies. Having been informed by Ramos Martínez that the Zapatistas desperately needed medical supplies, the naive Secretary of State did arrange for the Red Cross to supply them. When he arranged for Ramos Martínez to meet with Carranza's agents, the charlatan attempted to extort funds from them. Carranza, who had been willing to offer supplies in return for Zapata's pledge of loyalty, interpreted the episode as just one more annoying case of American meddling. Strangely, there is no evidence that Bryan at least before late August, ever suspected that Ramos Martínez was anything other than the legitimate agent of Zapata.[70] By that time he was so exasperated at dealing with the

[70]The correspondence and other documents relating to the negotiations are filed under document number 812.00/27474. A lengthy but often inaccurate account of the Ramos Martínez affair may be found in Teitelbaum, Woodrow Wilson and the Mexican Revolution, 143-60.

temperamental Mexican that he decided it would be better to send a State Department Agent to deal with Zapata. It seemed especially advisable when both Silliman and Canova reported in late August that clashes between Carranza and Zapata seemed likely.[71]

Bryan's thoughts naturally turned to Hall. In a letter to President Wilson, the Secretary described Hall "as a very honest and earnest man" who "has shown more interest [in Mexico] I think than any other American. . . ." Exaggerating a bit, he claimed that Hall was "an intimate friend of Zapata. . . ."[72] Ben G. Davis, Chief Clerk of the Department added a very attractive note in suggesting that Hall would probably be willing to serve with only his expenses being paid. Agreeing that he should serve on that basis, Wilson prophesied that Hall "may be extremely useful to us."[73]

Hall journeyed as far as Vera Cruz with Paul Fuller. By the time he arrived there, the situation had

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[71]Silliman to State Department, August 23, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 589; Silliman to State Department, August 24, 1914/12986; Canova to State Department, August 27, 30, 1914/13019, 13041.

[72]Bryan to Wilson, August 22, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 124. In his correspondence, Hall never claimed to be an intimate of Zapata, only that he had seen the leader of the South on several occasions.

[73]Davis to Bryan, August 22, 1914, ibid.; Wilson to Bryan, August 25, 1914, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence.

drastically changed. The Red Cross, meanwhile, had sent the Director of its Atlantic Division, Charles Jenkinson, into Zapata's stronghold. Besides bearing personal felicitations from Zapata to President Wilson, Jenkinson emerged from Morelos with the news that Hall was persona non grata in Zapatista country and that it would be dangerous for him to go there.[74] Upon receiving this news, Bryan cabled Vera Cruz, directing his newly appointed agent to remain there until Fuller had an opportunity to fully investigate Zapata's grievance.[75]

Hall was completely bewildered by this turn of events. Only later did he discover that Zapata was suspicious because of his association with Ramos Martínez. After discussing the matter with Silliman, who had come to Vera Cruz to meet Fuller, Hall jumped to the conclusion that Jenkinson was responsible for the misunderstanding. Jenkinson had discussed the Ramos Martínez episode with Zapata, and the rebel chieftain had assumed that Hall was

[74]Jenkinson to Wilson (enclosing Zapata to Wilson, August 23, 1914), September 8, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 116; Silliman to State Department, August 26, 29, 1914/13015, 13040. Jenkinson made an earlier trip into Morelos in December, 1913. At that time he also brought out a letter from Zapata to Wilson, but it was never answered. See Teitelbaum, Woodrow Wilson and the Mexican Revolution, 152-53. For Jenkinson's own description of his Red Cross service among the Zapatistas, see Charles Jenkinson, "Vera Cruz, What American Occupation Has Meant to a Mexican Community," The Survey, XXXIII (November 7, 1914), 133-34.

[75]State Department to Canada, August 30, 1914/13040.

just as guilty. Hall, however, was just as certain that Jenkinson was attempting to supercede him and carry on his own negotiations with Zapata. Silliman did not help matters. He told Hall that he had heard some disparaging reports of his past conduct. The irate Morman, thinking that he was the victim of some conspiracy by Jenkinson and Silliman, pleaded to no avail for permission to go to Zapata and vindicate himself.[76]

Hall spent three agonizing weeks in Vera Cruz, all the while begging for permission to go to Mexico City. On September 21, he received a letter from Silliman, indicating there was no hostility toward him in the capital. This was all he needed. Without departmental permission, he journeyed inland a few days later. He spent nearly two weeks in Mexico City, attempting to establish contacts in Zapata's country. During that time he sent to Washington lengthy and extremely critical reports of Carranza's regime. At length, a doctor friend from Morelos came for him. A few days later, on about

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[76] Shanklin (for Hall) to State Department, September 4, 1914/13108; Hall to Davis, September 5, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 1914/20609-1/2; Bryan to Shanklin (for Hall), September 4, 1914/13136a. Silliman had received word from a doctor in Mexico City that during the Decena Tragica, Hall, serving as a Cruz Blanca (a Mexican relief organization similar to the Red Cross) worker had given aid only to those who were attempting to depose Madero. Hall denied this charge, claiming that he assisted the wounded on both sides.

October 8, he disappeared into Zapata's stronghold. He received no encouragement from Washington; indeed, after the cable directing him to remain in Vera Cruz, he received no communications from Washington. Curiously enough, he had left Washington without formal credentials. Despite his requests for some before he went to Morelos, none were forthcoming.[77]

Back in Cuernavaca, the pertenacious Morman was highly suspected. The Zapatista officials at once wanted to see his credentials. He, of course, had none. The Zapatistas were very distressed over their relations with the United States. Through Jenkinson they had attempted to establish official relations with Washington but had received no reply. They could not understand why Carranza and Villa were accorded representatives from the United States and they had not. But most embarrassing of all for Hall, the day after his arrival in Cuernavaca he was presented with a letter from Zapata, in which the rebel chieftain revealed that Ramos Martínez had never

[77] Ibid.; Hall to Davis, September 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 26, 28, 30, October 1, 3, 5, 8, 1914/20609-1/2, 27430, 27431, 27432, 27433; Shanklin (for Hall) to State Department, September 21, 1914/13242. In a lengthy letter dated September 11, 1916, Hall reviewed his tribulations and claimed that he received his instructions from Bryan while riding in a carriage en route to Bryan's home. That particular day, Hall recalled, the Secretary of State was so busy that they had no other opportunity to meet and discuss his mission. He, therefore, received his instructions verbally. See/20609-1/2; copy in Buckley Papers, File no. 233.

legitimately represented the Zapatistas and that he was currently a wanted man. At first refusing to believe this news, the gullible American recovered his perspective after several days and reported what the State Department already knew: "Ramos Martínez has deceived us."[78]

Despite the Zapatistas' suspicions, Hall reported that he was treated cordially. He, nonetheless, renewed his pleas for official credentials. While he waited vainly, he continued his descriptive correspondence to Washington. In contrast to conditions in Mexico City, he reported, Morelos was quiet and the people were living in peace and harmony. There was no looting, the government was functioning to everyone's satisfaction, a program for breaking up the large haciendas and distributing the land to the peasants had been inaugurated, and the crops were being harvested. In short, the Zapatistas were carrying out their own tidy revolution.[79]

Once in Zapata's mountains, Hall had great difficulty communicating with the outside world. Occasionally, when other messages were sent out, he was allowed to send

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[78]Hall to Davis, October 11, 12, 14, 21, 1914/20609-1/2, 27436, 27424; Zapata to Hall, October 12, 1914/27453.

[79]Ibid.; Womack, using different sources, largely substantiated Hall's descriptions of the Zapatistas and their local revolution. See Zapata, 211.

a letter to Washington; but he received no return correspondence. Bryan waited until October 22 before even attempting to communicate with Hall. Having received Hall's plea for credentials, and possibly fearing for his safety, Bryan directed Davis to send a message to Hall through Consul General Shanklin. It was not the letter of credentials that Hall had asked for. Addressed "to whom it may concern," the letter reviewed Hall's activities in Washington in behalf of the Zapatistas, then stated that the Department had been "pleased to place its facilities, unofficially, at Mr. Hall's disposal" and had permitted him "to transmit and receive information through its agents . . . ." The note closed by endorsing Hall's character, but it said nothing about his future relations with the Department.[80]

Even this innocuous letter might have been some comfort to Hall, had Shanklin known how to get it to him. So Hall remained in Cuernavaca and brooded because his country had forgotten him. In time the Zapatistas' suspicions of him dissipated, and he got along quite well. Certainly the Administration had no compelling reason to claim him. With him periodically sending lengthy and informative letters to Washington, the State Department enjoyed all the benefits of his efforts without facing any liabilities.

[80]State Department to Shanklin, October 22, 1914/27474.

The Administration, meanwhile, read off as hopeless any attempt by the United States to bring Zapata and Carranza together. But Jenkinson had reported seeing Villista agents in Morelos and claimed that Zapata and Villa were working in harmony. If Villa and Obregón could some to some agreement with the First Chief, hopefully Zapata would accept it.[81] The promotion of the Villa-Obregón axis, then, seemed to offer the best avenue for the adjustment of all grievances.

The Washington-inspired coalition, however, was enduring severe trials. On September 13, Carranza notified Obregón that the provisions of the pact he and Villa had agreed to some ten days before were too momentous to be decided upon by two or three men and that they would be reviewed by the revolutionary junta which was scheduled for the capital on October 1.[82] The most serious test of the coalition's strength, however, came from within. Renewed conflict in Sonora between Maytorena and the Carrancistas, now led by General Benjamin Hill, again provided Obregón with a pretext to travel north to meet with Villa. Departing from Mexico City on September 13, he was accompanied by Carothers, Canova, and General Juan Cabral,

[81] Silliman to State Department, August 26, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 591.

[82] Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, II, 71.

who earlier had been designated to replace Maytorena as governor of Sonora. Since Carranza's occupation of the capital, Canova had been relatively idle. He had distressed the Brazilian Minister, who was still officially in charge of American affairs in Mexico City, because he operated independently and had not even called at the legation. Feeling that Canova was surplus in the Mexican capital, Bryan had directed the agent to return to Washington for reassignment. Taking advantage of the comfort of Carothers' private car, he traveled north with the Obregón party.[83]

Carothers had been directed to proceed to the border with General Cabral and lend his effort to the repacification of Sonora. Aware that Obregón bore an invitation for Villa and his chiefs to attend the junta in Mexico City, the agent paused in Chihuahua long enough to discuss the matter with the Centaur of the North. The rebel leader was beside himself with rage because Carranza had not accepted outright the Villa-Obregón pact. The First Chief's junta would be rigged, he warned. The State Department agent pleaded that Obregón was an honorable man and that he and the other generals would enforce justice.

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[83]Simpich to State Department, September 9, 10, 1914/13137, 13153; Cobb to State Department, September 10, 1914/13146; State Department to Silliman, September 11, 12, 1914/13153, 13167; State Department to Canova, September 10, 1914/13174a; Canova to State Department, September 11, 1914/13164.

Forced to leave for the border before he could pacify the strong man of the North, Carothers persuaded Canova to remain behind and continue the effort.[84]

When Carothers arrived in El Paso, a wire from Canova awaited him. Canova and Obregón had again spoken to Villa, and Villa had agreed to send representatives to the junta if Carranza would agree to immediate elections and the establishment of a civil government. The junta, he demanded, must be short and to the point and must not act as a governing body. Canova despaired that a complete break would result if Carranza refused to accede to Villa's provisos.[85]

On the afternoon of September 19, Canova had another appointment with Villa, but when he arrived at the general's headquarters he found that Villa and Obregón were quarreling violently. The American agent quickly moved to a courtyard adjoining the headquarters building, where he could hear the conversation without appearing to be eavesdropping. Villa had just received a telegram from Sonora which laid the blame for the renewed hostilities on the Carrancistas. Suspicious of Obregón because he had compromised with Carranza on the matter of the revolutionary convention,

[84]Carothers to State Department, September 19, 1914/13227; copy in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 63; Canova to State Department, September 22, 1914/13323.

[85]Carothers to State Department, September 19, 1914/13227.

Villa now charged the general with dealing in bad faith on the pacification of Sonora. Villa called in a squad of soldiers and threatened to kill Obregón unless he ordered General Hill's troops to evacuate Sonora. Although Obregón refused, Villa's temper subsided and, after some discussion, Obregón wired Hill to withdraw a short distance from the trouble-spot. Their friendship apparently restored, the two generals went dancing together that night.[86] The incident seemed to have passed, but a series of resulting misunderstandings brought Mexico again to the brink of civil war.

Rumors reached Mexico City that Villa was holding Obregon prisoner in Chihuahua. Carranza, fearing renewal of hostilities, not only suspended rail traffic south of Torreón but countermanded Obregón's withdrawal order to General Hill.[87] Villa, meanwhile become more and more conciliatory, had agreed that his delegates should accompany Obregón to the junta. On September 21, the two generals sent a joint telegram warning Carranza not to

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[86] Ibid.; Canova to State Department, September 22, 1914/13323; Guzmán, Memoirs of Pancho Villa, 312-18; Obregón, Ocho mil kilómetros en campana, 312-14. Villa's and Obregón's accounts of the incident differ greatly. Canova offers a more balanced treatment.

[87] Silliman to State Department, September 21, 22, 1914/13243, 13268; Silliman to State Department, September 23, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 605; Belt to State Department, September 25, 1914/13292.

attempt to control the proposed meeting. Carranza refused to accept it as authentic. When Villa's delegates, accompanied by Obregón, were stopped at Torreón, Villa interpreted this as an attempt by Carranza to prevent him from being represented. Obregón was returned to Chihuahua, where he became a virtual prisoner.[88]

Carothers, who had been sitting in El Paso, attempting to deal with the troubles in Sonora and Chihuahua, and unable to treat either satisfactorily, was ordered to hasten to Villa's side and use his influence to calm the rebel chieftain.[89] He arrived too late. Villa had withdrawn any recognition of Carranza and declared his intention to move at once on the capital to oust the "dictator." Canova, who witnessed the whole turn of events, reported that Villa, "his eyes dancing and his face smiling," was delighted at the opportunity to fight Carranza.[90]

The entire impasse was most unfortunate since it resulted from a series of misunderstandings. It pointed out a weakness in the State Department's representation in Mexico. One of the primary responsibilities of the agents

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[88]Canova to State Department, September 22, 25, 1914/13247, 13326; Carothers to State Department, September 22, 23, 1914/13217, 13247; El Paso Morning Times, September 24, 1914.

[89]Carothers to State Department and State Department to Carothers, September 23, 1914/13271.

[90]Canova to State Department, September 23, 25, 1914/13275, 13326.

was to make every effort to prevent a renewal of warfare. Yet, during this time of crisis, there was absolutely no communications between Silliman in Mexico City and Canova and Carothers in Northern Mexico. Each was allowed by the Department to become so engrossed with one factional leader that the positive benefits of close coordination between all the agents was ignored. Had there been some planned liaison between them, the misunderstanding might well have been detected and the breach prevented.

In the long run, it was Obregón, not the American agents, who averted war. The general's staff, meanwhile, was distraught, fearful for their commander's safety. They urged him to remain with Canova at all times, and they pleaded with the agent to intercede in his behalf. Canova did speak first to one of Villa's closest advisors, Eugenio Aguirre Benevides, then to Villa himself. Obregón, he argued, was anxious to find a settlement suitable to the Villistas and, if allowed to go to Mexico City, would attempt to pressure Carranza into making concessions. After one long interview, Villa abruptly revealed that Obregón would be sent to El Paso. Canova again argued the necessity of sending Obregón directly to Mexico City, but Villa said that his decision would stand. Carothers had not yet arrived to lend his influence.[91]

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[91]Canova to State Department, September 25, 1914/13326; Canova to Bryan, personal, October 9, 1914/27411.

Dejected, Canova revealed Villa's plans to Obregón. He assured the Mexican general that he would accompany him to the border to insure his safety. But Obregón was more despondent over the prospect of renewed warfare than he was concerned for his own safety. "This situation is criminal, Mr. Canova," he lamented, "for everything possible should be done by both sides to avoid another revolution."[92] Just before Obregón and Canova were to depart for El Paso, Villa reversed his decision and sent word that Obregón would be allowed to go directly to Mexico City. Obregón thanked Canova for his efforts and promised to do everything in his power to persuade Carranza to relent so that a reconciliation might be accomplished. Only weeks later did Canova discover that Villa had sent ahead a train with an officer and some soldiers who were supposed to stop Obregón's train, take him off and assassinate him. When Aguirre Benevides, who also wished to avoid further bloodshed, discovered the plot, he braved Villa's wrath, intervened without Villa's knowledge, and allowed Obregón to pass unharmed to Mexico City.[93]

The combined pressures of Carothers, who shortly

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[92]Canova to State Department, September 25, 1914/13326; Obregón, Ocho mil kilómetros en campaña, 315-16.

[93]Ibid.; Canova to Bryan, personal, October 9, 1914/27411.

arrived from the border, Canova, Aguirre Benevides, and others of Villa's staff eventually had their effect on Villa. Carothers' influence appears to have been crucial. Before his arrival in Chihuahua, Villa had been anxious to fight. Within a day after Carothers' arrival, Villa agreed to call of his advance on Mexico City and accept a peaceful solution. He at first suggested that Fernando Iglesias Calderón, an old reformer who had vehemently opposed Huerta, assume control of the provisional government. When Carranza rejected this proposal, Villa on September 30 issued a "Manifesto to the Mexican People," setting forth his grievances and urging the people to join him in demanding representative government.[94] That same day, Obregón, who had the coolest head throughout those trying times, persuaded Carranza to accept one more conciliation attempt. Under pressure from the American agents and his own advisors, Villa also acceded to send delegates to meet with Carranza's at Zacatecas. With Carothers in attendance, the conference, which was dominated by Obregón, agreed that Carranza's junta should meet in Mexico City only to usse a call for a larger revolutionary convention to be held at Aguascalientes. It was to convene on October 10, all factions were to be

[94]Carothers to State Department, September 26, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 605; Belt to State Department, September 29, 1914, ibid., 606; Francisco Villa, "Manifesto to the Mexican People," ibid., 607-608.

represented on the basis provided for in the Pact of Torreón, and Carranza was to relinquish his authority as First Chief to this larger body.[95]

When the junta met in Mexico City, the generals lived up to their bargain. More encouragingly, Carranza accepted their decision.[96] The Administration's friendly relations with Villa seemed to have paid off. Even Canova, who had seen Villa at his very worst, conceded that the Centaur of the North was "a great man, in a way. He has genius, and there is much to admire in him, but at heart he is plainly a savage . . . With proper training and counseling," he prophesied, "Villa can be developed into a great character. . . ."[97] But even as Canova praised Villa it was becoming daily more apparent that Alvaro Obregón was the more likely instrument of the destruction of Carranza's power. In the same message in which he lauded Villa, Canova was only slightly less complimentary of Obregón. He is "a frank, likeable fellow," the agent wrote, "a good mixer, democratic, expresses

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[95]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, October 1, 1914/13353; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1774.

[96]Canova to State Department, October 2, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 608; Belt to State Department, October 2, 3, 6, 1914/13354, 13366, 13399; El Pueblo, October 4, 1914.

[97]Canova to Bryan, personal, October 9, 1914/27411.

himself well and is not a hot head."[98] Fuller, who met Obregón in Mexico City, was also impressed. In his final report to Wilson, Fuller characterized Obregón as "a stern soldierly man, . . . a man of discretion . . ." who was "unwilling to admit to a stranger that his chief might be made to yield to pressure." But Fuller implied that the Obregón hinted as much.[99] At any rate, Obregón and Villa seemed to have vindicated Wilson's policy. But the man in the White House, as future events were to prove, would have been wise to look not to Villa in the future but to Obregón, who was the stronger of the two.

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[98] Ibid.

[99] Fuller, Memorandum for the President, September 18, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 117.

CHAPTER X

THE RETREAT BEGINS

The fall and winter of 1914 witnessed still another shift in Wilson's Mexican policy: if not the emergence of neutrality, then certainly a growing reluctance to become further involved in the revolutionaries' factional squabbles. As the delegates assembled for the revolutionary Convention of Aguascalientes, Secretary of State Bryan suggested to the President that he personally urge both Villa and Carranza to cooperate with the Convention in creating a constitutional government.[1] Wilson neither replied to Bryan nor made such an appeal to the factional leaders. Once the Convention began its deliberations, he made no attempt to influence its decisions. Perhaps his mind was occupied more with the problems of war-torn Europe. He may well have been satisfied that the Villa-Obregón coalition had matters well in hand and, working through the Convention, would promote a constitutional regime. On the other hand, he may have reasoned that interference by the United States would alienate the

[1] Bryan to Wilson, October 7, 1914, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence.

apparently cooperative Carrancistas and give their chief a pretext for scuttling the Convention. Or he may have just assumed that, having aided in raising Villa to a pinnacle of power, it was time to give him an opportunity to sink or swim alone. Yet Villa's actions in nearly assassinating Obregón may have caused Wilson to pause before extending further support.[2] Such a shift in policy at this particular juncture was uncharacteristic of Wilson, since the deliberations at Aguascalientes seemingly offered him tantalizing opportunities for molding Mexican institutions more along Anglo-Saxon lines.

Whatever Wilson's attitude might have been, it was not always shared by his special agents. While the Convention met, the agents received no extraordinary instructions. It was a time of relative inactivity for George Carothers. He remained with Villa, who was encamped at Guadalupe, a rail center some 100 miles north of Aguascalientes, and merely reported the general's impressions (which were almost entirely favorable) of the Convention's proceedings. Noticeably missing were the constant reminders and suggestions from the State Department, which aimed at guiding Villa in a proper course of action. Carothers later complained

[2]The documents give no clues as to the reasons for Wilson's policy shift. In fact, the exchange of expressions between the White House and the State Department concerning Mexican Affairs decreased markedly in October and November.

at the lack of guidance from Washington.[3] The only request that the Administration made of Villa during this time was that he aid in ending the fighting on the Sonora-Arizona border between Maytorena and the Carrancistas. At Carothers' suggestion, Villa referred the matter to the Convention, which despatched General Ramón V. Sosa to Sonora to put an end to the conflict. Sosa's efforts proved unavailing and the fighting continued.[4]

For his part, Villa made only one significant request of Carothers. He asked the agent to request that the Administration suppress various revolutionary juntas in New Orleans, San Antonio, and El Paso, because they were hostile to his interests. True to the Administration's emerging policy of non-involvement, Carothers was directed to reply that unless Villa could give specific evidence that these organizations were violating the neutrality laws of the United States, the Justice Department could not move against them.[5]

The period of the Convention of Aguascalientes was Leon Canova's busiest time in Mexico. The Administration,

[3]Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1770.

[4]State Department to Carothers, October 16, 1914/13547a; Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, October 21, 1914/13548.

[5]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, October 6, 1914, and State Department to Cobb (for Carothers), October 8, 1914/13417.

having recalled him in September, reconsidered its decision because of Canova's efforts during the Villa-Obregón quarrel in Chihuahua, and decided to retain him in Mexico. At first he was directed to accompany Villa and assist Carothers. After the calling of the Convention of Aguascalientes, he was directed to observe the sessions and report.[6] Sending as many as four coded messages daily by Mexican telegraph was job enough in itself. The telegraphers so butchered the messages that Canova often had to repeat them two or three times before Zach Cobb, who relayed them from El Paso, could understand them. In order to insure that Washington got an accurate account, Canova periodically codified the briefer telegraphic despatches into letters that ran up to twenty pages. Even his telegraphic messages became so lengthy and vivid that acting Secretary of State Robert Lansing directed him to leave all unnecessary detail and opinion to his letters.[7]

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[6]State Department to Canova, September 23, 1914/13272; State Department to Canova, October 4, 1914/13391; El Paso Morning Times, October 5, 7, 1914.

[7]Lansing to Canova, October 29, 1914/13619. Many of Canova's despatches from Aguascalientes are found in Foreign Relations, 1914, 610-27; but these are only a small portion of his reports. Collectively, his messages constitute one of the richest and most colorful sources for reconstructing the events of the revolutionary convention. Robert E. Quirk, who has written the standard monograph on the Convention, relies as heavily upon Canova's accounts as those of Vito Alessio Robles, the recording secretary of the Convention. See The Mexican Revolution, 101-31.

Canova's early reports may well have encouraged Wilson's hands-off policy. On the eve of the Convention, the special agent was apprehensive. Villa marched his troops into Zacatecas. Carranza's armies surrounded the convention city to the South. Canova reported from Aguascalientes that the arriving delegates were fearful for their safety. But when the convention convened, these anxieties evaporated. Villa, true to his promise, kept his troops one hundred miles away at Guadalupe. General Natera remained neutral, and his troops protected the Convention. The delegates, Canova reported, mingled in "a spirit of cordiality and good fellowship. . . ."[8] Previously antagonistic personalities found themselves applauding one another's comments. The delegates, however, were in no mood to humor the factional leaders. Even the Carrancistas, Canova noted, were determined that the First Chief should "take a back seat" to the Convention. Nor would Villa, who had lost prestige because of his treatment of Obregón, be allowed to dominate the proceedings.[9]

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[8]Canova to State Department, letter, October 9, 1914/27411.

[9]Canova to State Department, letters, October 5, 8, 9, 1914/27410, 13518, 27411; Cobb (for Canova) to State Department, October 6, 8, 12, 1914/13415, 13437, 13490. The traditional historical view of the Convention of Aguascalientes is that it was dominated by the Villistas and that Villa, with thousands of troops nearby, intimidated the Carrancistas. The whole affair, therefore, was

Canova quickly developed a close affinity for the convention delegates as they assembled and began deliberations in the Morelos Theatre. His descriptions of the scenes were charged with emotion aroused when the body declared itself sovereign, and then, each member, in affirmation of fidelity to his purpose, signed and kissed the Mexican flag. Led by Obregón, the Convention adopted the formula for representation prescribed by the Pact of Torreón: only military men who commanded as many as 1000 troops were seated. So that no one could gain unfair advantage by late recruiting, the size of the armies at the time of the battle of Zacatecas was established as the proportional base for representation. In another show of good faith, the Convention sent a commission, led by General Felipe Angeles, to Morelos to invite Zapata to send delegates.[10] The conventioneers' personal conduct was exemplary. "Few of the men attending the convention," Canova wrote to Washington, "have any knowledge of parliamentary proceedings, many are men of limited

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a sham. Carranza encouraged this view. Robert E. Quirk applied a corrective in the previously cited work, The Mexican Revolution, 105-106, 114. Citing convention records, he substantiates Canova's view that the Convention was at first independent of factional control. Only after the Carrancistas withdrew did the Villistas and Zapatistas dominate.

[10] Cobb (for Canova) to State Department, October 11 (two), 12 (three), 14 (two), 15, 16, 1914/13454, 23463, 13469, 13474, 13490, 13507, 13511, 13513, 13521.

education and, it must be admitted, some are men of most unsavory reputations and are dangerous in extreme." Almost proudly, he noted that their "proceedings have been so well conducted and so orderly, that I . . . cannot but compliment them."[11]

Canova mingled freely, almost as if he were a delegate. He was frequently photographed with the conventioneers, including the chairman Antonio J. Villarreal.[12] While the Convention bided its time, waiting for the Zapatistas, Canova renewed old acquaintanceships among the Carrancistas and brought them together with his newly found friends among the Villistas. Instead of heaping recriminations upon the other faction's leaders, each side was almost maudlin in bemoaning the shortcomings of its own leader. Villarreal, the Carrancista military governor of the state of Nuevo León, decried the stubbornness of the First Chief. Not to be outdone, General Eugenio Aguirre Benevides, a Villista, claimed that keeping Villa in line was like catering to a spoiled child. To that, Villarreal retorted that Villa was tractable most of the time, whereas Carranza was impossible to deal with all of the time. Not realizing how prophetic they were,

[11]Canova to State Department, October 14, 1914/13572.

[12]Pablo Casasola, Historia Gráfica de la Revolución Mexicana, 1910-1960 (4 vols.; México, D.F.: Editorial F. Trillas, S.A., 1960), II, 905-908.

both Villerreal and Aguirre Benevides mused that peace might be easier achieved if Villa and Carranza were sent on diplomatic missions.[13]

On October 17, Villa created a temporary stir by personally appearing in Aguascalientes. He, too, kissed and signed the flag, and Canova reported that the Convention was delirious with joy when Villa and Obregón met at the front of the theatre and locked arms in an _abrazo_. For the remainder of the day, Canova reported, exhortations of patriotism flowed like wine.[14] Carothers, who accompanied Villa to Aguascalientes, reported that Villa was overwhelmed by the reception he received and had pledged himself to support any provisional president the Convention might chose.[15] The special agent also told reporters from Mexico City that Villa thought that the prospects for lasting peace were good.[16]

The Convention was even more lively after the arrival of the _Zapatistas_. The delegation was led by the intellectual elite of the revolution of the South. Among them were Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, a one-time anarchist

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[13] Cobb (for Canova) to State Department, October 12 (two), 1914/13469, 13474; Canova to State Department, letter, October 21, 1914/13633.

[14] Cobb (for Canova) to State Department, October 18, 1914/13529; _El Liberal_, October 18, 1914.

[15] Carothers to State Department, October 18, 1914, _Foreign Relations_, _1914_, 611.

[16] _El Pueblo_, October 18, 1914.

who was thoroughly conversant in the ideas of Kropotkin, Bukanin, and Marx, and Otilio E. Montaño, collaborator with Zapata in drafting the Plan of Ayala.[17] No one outside Morelos knew much about the Zapatistas; consequently, they were viewed with great curiosity by the other delegates. Since the number of soldiers serving Zapata was a mystery, many were surprised that only a delegation of twenty-six came to Aguascalientes. The Carrancistas were relieved, because Villa had thirty-seven, and even a coalition of Villistas and Zapatistas could not outvote the rest of the assembly.[18]

Canova reported that the Zapatistas were shy and cautious and did not mix well with the other delegates. They were not shy, however, in attempting to impose their own program on the Convention. On October 27, Paulino Martínez mounted the rostrum and declared that the Zapatistas would not even accede to be seated as delegates until the Convention adopted the Plan of Ayala as its sole standard of conduct. Before the assembly quit muttering over Martínez's demands, Díaz Soto y Gama rose and challenged the Convention's courage to ignore Villa and Carranza and strike some independent blows for the

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[17] Canova to State Department, October 28, 1914/13619; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 107; Womack, Zapata, 193, 396; Cockroft, Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution, 71-73.

[18] Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 107-108.

welfare of all Mexicans. He chided them for paying homage to the flag. It was not the flag of liberty, he declared, but the banner of tyrants, such as Díaz and Huerta. He snatched the flag from the rostrum, crumpled it in his fist, and waved it tauntingly at the crowd. Again, pandemonium reigned in the Morelos Theatre. But whereas Canova had found the excitement produced by Villa and Obregón's embrace exhilarating, he was frightened by the uproar created by the Zapatistas. "The members of the Convention rose to their feet, their faces livid with indignation, trembling, and shaking their fists at the speaker," Canova wrote to Bryan shortly afterward. "The delegates screamed at one another, with left hands pounding their chests, and their right hands on their pistols, for all were mad." Ready to flee himself, the special agent revealed that "from the crowded boxes and galleries of the theatre, humanity was tumbling over itself in a mad effort to escape imminent danger."[19]

The threat of violence was only temporary. Tempers cooled, and the delegates allowed the Zapatistas to continue their appeal for the Plan of Ayala. Their audacity paid dividends. In a conciliatory mood, two days after the incident, the Convention adopted the Plan of Ayala "in principle," but retained the right to reject those

[19]Cobb (for Canova) to Bryan, October 28, 29, 1914/ 13619, 13702.

clauses that did not conform to the purposes of the Convention.[20] Although Canova was suspicious of Soto y Gama's radicalism, he complimented the Zapatistas on their persuasiveness and ability to win acceptance of their views.[21]

On November 1, the Zapatistas also gave evidence of willingness to compromise by giving up their demand for a triumverate provisional executive, with one representative from the Army of the South, and agreed to support Eulalio Gutiérrez, military governor of the state of San Luis Potosí and a mild Carrancista, as provisional president. Gutierréz was deemed independent enough that even the Villistas supported him.[22] Canova was ecstatic. "Surely, the Republic of Mexico was born again last night by the selection of a man [around] whom all factions and elements could center without discord," he wrote to Bryan.[23] The American agent was certain that Mexico was well on the way to solving its problems. Regardless of his overall optimism, he was forced to interject a discouraging note.

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[20] Cobb (for Canova) to State Department, October 30, 1914/13638.

[21] Canova to State Department, letter, November 10, 1914/13924.

[22] Canova to State Department, November 2, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 617; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 115-18.

[23] Canova to State Department, letter, November 2, 1914/13738.

Carranza not only refused to attend the Convention, or send a delegate to represent him, but absolutely refused to acknowledge the assembly's right to declare itself sovereign.[24]

Ominously, Carothers reported from Guadalupe that Villa was furious over Carranza's recalcitrance. Villa promised the special agent that he would apply no pressure on the Convention to take punitive action, that he would wait patiently, but if he was ordered to take the field against the First Chief, he would "do so with keen pleasure."[25] Even Villa became hopeful when the Convention chose Gutiérrez as provisional president. He immediately wired the Convention of his satisfaction and, to Carothers, he pledged his full support of the new provisional president. Speaking for himself, Villa, and Villa's staff, Carothers optimistically telegraphed the Department: "We all believe end of trouble is in sight."[26]

John Silliman, meanwhile, had gone to Washington at Carranza's behest to confer personally with President Wilson. Well aware that Carothers had earlier visited

[24]Canova to State Department, October 23, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 612; Cobb (for Canova) to State Department, October 30, 1914/13638.

[25]Carothers to State Department, October 23, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 611-12.

[26]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, November 3, 1914/13671.

Bryan in Villa's behalf, Carranza, on September 23, placed a special train at Silliman's disposal and requested that the American agent take a message to Washington. Leaving his assistant, John W. Belt, behind to represent the Department in the First Chief's headquarters, Silliman departed immediately for the border, even before receiving authority from his superiors.[27] The special agent was, therefore, not available to lend any influence during the critical period while Obregón and the other conciliatory Carrancista generals were arranging the Convention of Aguascalientes. It is doubtful that he could have been of much service, since Carranza ignored him except when it was convenient to do otherwise.

Wilson and Bryan were not at all satisfied with Silliman's service to the State Department. In August, they had even considered replacing him. In the end, they decided that because he was Wilson's old friend he at least presented an aura of personally representing the President of the United States.[28] This decision signaled their admission that they could do little to influence Carranza. Although they had retained Silliman's

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[27] Silliman to State Department, September 23, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 605; Silliman to State Department, September 25, 1914, NA 125.8273/120; Nueva Patria (Mexico City), September 26, 1914.

[28] Bryan to Wilson, August 17, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 114; Wilson to Bryan, August 18, 1914, Bryan Papers, Box 43.

services, Wilson and Bryan did not wish to confer with him in October, especially since the agent's coming would be counter to their emerging policy of non-involvement. When Silliman arrived in San Antonio, he received a telegram from Bryan, directing him not to proceed further unless he thought it absolutely necessary. Replying that he thought a conference with the President was "desirable," the special agent continued on to the capital.[29]

At no time before his arrival in Washington did Silliman reveal his reasons for coming. Since he departed before the calling of the Convention of Aguascalientes, while Villa and Carranza were still very much at odds, the special agent had, more than likely, been asked to present Carranza's view of the conflict. More definitely, he had been requested to renew the First Chief's demand for the evacuation of American troops from Vera Cruz.[30]

As earlier revealed, Wilson had agreed to the evacuation on September 16, after first Carranza, then

[29]State Department to Silliman, October 1, 1914, NA 125.8273/125; Silliman to State Department, October 2, 1914/13363; New York Times, September 27, 1914, II, p. 11; Ibid., October 5, 1914, p. 11.

[30]Silliman never revealed in his correspondence the exact nature of his visit, nor is there a record of his conversations with either Wilson or Bryan. There is little reason to doubt the accuracy of an account of his visit in the Washington Post, October 9, 1914, which revealed that the Vera Cruz evacuation was the primary subject of his discussions with the President.

Obregón and Villa, requested that he do so. Although Wilson made the offer in good faith, at the time he was not aware of all the implications involved in the evacuation. General Frederick Funston, the American commander in Vera Cruz, revealed, for example, that the local merchants feared that the Constitutionalists might force them to pay extra import duties on items for which they had already paid duties to the American authorities. He also indicated that Mexicans, who had served the American military government, feared reprisals at the hands of the Constitutionalists, as did the hundreds of refugees, including priests and nuns and ex-Huertistas, who had crowded into the port city. These revelations had prompted Wilson, on September 22, to direct Robert Lansing, the acting Secretary of State, to notify Carranza that the evacuation would not take place until he specifically guaranteed that there would be no punitive measures of this nature.[31] The receipt of this message may well have prompted Carranza to send Silliman to Washington.

Anticipating help from the American agent, the First Chief was slow in replying to Lansing's note on September 22. Impatiently, Bryan, on October 1, renewed the request

[31]War Department to State Department, September 21, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 601-602; State Department to Oliveira, September 22, 1914, ibid., 603.

for guarantees. Four days later, Foreign Minister Fabela finally delivered a note to the Brazilian Minister, Cardoso de Oliveira, which ignored the demand for guarantees and merely notified Washington that General Cándido Aguilar had been designated to receive the port of Vera Cruz from General Funston.[32] When Silliman arrived in Washington at approximately the same time, he walked into a hornets' nest. Wilson and Bryan were in no mood to listen to any pro-Carranza trappings. Instead, they directed their agent to personally address a message, informing Fabela that his note had not been "sufficiently explicit" on the matter of guarantees. When, again, no reply was immediately forthcoming, Silliman was sent packing back to Mexico to extract the guarantees from the First Chief.[33]

En route to Vera Cruz, Silliman told reporters in Havana that he was confident the evacuation problems could be "straightened out."[34] He also sent encouraging news from Vera Cruz. He spoke to General Aguilar, who was quite willing to issue a proclamation embodying the guarantees requested by President Wilson.[35] Upon

[32]State Department to Oliveira, October 1, 1914, ibid., 608; Oliveira to State Department, October 5, 1914, ibid., 609.

[33]State Department to Oliveira (conveying Silliman to Fabela, October 7, 1914), October 7, 1914, ibid., 609-10; Washington Post, October 9, 1914.

[34]New York Times, October 13, 1914, p. 7.

[35]Canada (for Silliman) to State Department, October 16, 1914/13514.

returning to Mexico City, Silliman reported that even the Convention had instructed Carranza to adhere to the demands of the United States.[36] Knowing well Silliman's pro-Carranza attitude, the capital city press, meanwhile, had interpreted the agent's conversations with Aguilar as preliminaries to the immediate withdrawal of American troops. His return to Mexico was heralded as evidence of growing cordiality between the United States and Carranza.[37]

Following his instructions, Silliman was forced to dispel this impression. He again pressed the First Chief for guarantees that no punitive action would be taken against the people of Vera Cruz. In reply, Carranza acknowledged the justice of the American demands, but refused to accede to them. If he did so, he insisted, he would set a dangerous precedent by allowing a foreign power to dictate what constituted proper treatment of Mexican nationals by their own legally constituted authorities.[38] Carranza's super-sensitive nationalism again proved a stumbling-block, and the Vera Cruz matter remained unsettled until late November.

[36]Silliman to State Department, October 19, 1914/ 13537.

[37]El Pueblo, October 18, 20, 1914; El Liberal, October 18, 1914; El Democrata (Mexico City), October 19, 1914.

[38]Silliman to State Department, October 19, 1914/ 13537.

The First Chief, of course, still considered himself to be the only legal authority in Mexico. By taking this stand, he defied not only Wilson but the Convention, which demanded with equal vigor that it was the guardian of Mexican sovereignty.

Carranza set himself against the Convention as soon as it adopted measures that were counter to his Plan of Guadalupe. His opposition was not born of cynicism. He was convinced of his own rectitude. There were cynics aplenty among his close advisors. During the first days of the Convention, while Silliman was absent, Belt reported that Fabela was contemptuous of the deliberations at Aguascalientes. The Carrancista Foreign Minister told the acting American agent that only war could solve the conflict between his chief and Villa. He off-handedly suggested that it would be better to get the fighting over with now, while Mexico was prostrate, rather than allow her to be rebuilt, then destroy herself again. Luis Cabrera, another of Carranza's closest associates, told Belt that he, too, had little faith in the Convention's ability to find amicable solutions to Mexico's problems. More fighting seemed inevitable, especially since the Convention was made up entirely of military men and accepted no civilian influence.[39]

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[39]Belt to State Department, October 8 (two), 1914/ 13433, 13443.

By the time Silliman returned to Mexico City, Carranza seemed resigned to the necessity of fighting Villa. On November 2, the special agent reported that the First Chief had left the city. Although ostensibly on a sight-seeing tour of the pyramids at Teotihuacán, Silliman informed Washington that he did not expect Carranza to return. Since Mexico City was occupied by the soldiers of General Lucio Blanco, a delegate to the Convention, the First Chief and his civilian entourage did not feel secure there. Silliman reported that Carranza had taken refuge with General Francisco Coss in Córdoba. The American agent also reported that the First Chief, safe in his new sanctuary, had announced his willingness to fight those who opposed him.[40]

Perhaps the cynics were correct. It seemed more and more apparent that, despite its promising beginning, the Convention could not restore harmony in the revolutionary family. Carranza's intransigence remained a stumbling block. The Convention also became intractable, insisting that Carranza adhere strictly to its dictates. In making their decisions, the delegates seemed more intent upon subjecting their former chief to their will than upon promoting the welfare of the Mexican people. If the early,

[40]Silliman to State Department, October 19, 20, 22 (two), November 3, 4, 1914/13535, 13547, 13570, 13571, 13675, 13689; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 104-105.

seemingly constructive, actions of the Convention had encouraged Wilson to adopt a hands-off policy, conversely, its later, nihilistic tendencies may well have pointed up the folly of siding with any faction and encouraged him to continue non-involvement.

In the last days of October and the first days of November, the Convention attempted a complete transfer of power from the First Chief to its own provisional president. On October 29, Carranza, speaking through General Obregón, indicated a "disposition" to resign if the Convention would compel Villa and Zapata to do the same. The Convention made no decision concerning Zapata but did vote overwhelmingly to accept the resignations of Carranza and Villa. Although Villa expressed a willingness to abide by this mandate, he also reported that his troops were ready to support the assembly should Carranza decline. A commission headed by Obregón was sent to notify Carranza that his resignation had been accepted. When the First Chief refused to receive the commission at Córdoba, the Convention declared that unless he surrendered the executive power to the Provisional President by 6:00 p.m., November 10, he would be declared a rebel. Carranza thereupon directed his generals to withdraw from the Convention and take command of their respective units. When the allotted time

elapsed, the Convention declared him a rebel.[41]

The civil war was renewed as Gutiérrez called Villa out of "retirement" and ordered him to take the field against Carranza. Before the battle began, there were last-ditch attempts to avert bloodshed. Various plans for exiling both Carranza and Villa were proposed by the generals. The two chief antagonists even agreed to accept one or more of these plans if the other first gave evidence of compliance. While these tragi-comedies were being enacted, with none of the performers showing the divine spark necessary to bring them to happy conclusion, Villa was driving southward.[42]

Canova remained convinced that the Convention was making the right decisions. Literally smitten by the atmosphere of this assemblage, he could find no faults with its actions. At the same time, Carranza became the arch-villain in his eyes. "The continuance of General Carranza in power," he wrote to Bryan shortly after the First Chief had refused to turn over the executive power

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[41] Canova to State Department, October 29, 30, November 2, 5, 9, 10, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 615-20; Cobb (for Canova) to State Department, November 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 1914/13658, 13684, 13694, 13704, 13741; Silliman to State Department, November 9, 1914/13729.

[42] Canova to State Department, November 14, 15, 16, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 622-23; Carothers to State Department, ibid., 625; Silliman to State Department, November 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 (two), 18, 1914/13742, 13756, 13772, 13779, 13793, 13795, 13816.

to Gutiérrez, "would in no manner symbolize the triumph of the revolution, for it would only mean the overthrow of one dictator to place another in power." The First Chief, Canova insisted, had forgotten all the altruism that moved him when they first met in Monterrey during the month of June. Now, only personal ambition directed his actions.[43]

Carranza's generals also drew Canova's ire. When many of them broke with the Convention and sided with the First Chief, Canova too readily assumed that they did so because of disappointed political ambitions. Generals Eduardo Hay, Antonio Villarreal, and Alvaro Obregón, he insisted, had all "hoped that presidential lightening would strike them."[44] The other delegates, however, had grown wise to their ambitions and had eliminated them as presidential prospects.[45]

Villarreal and Hay, Canova believed, had then sought to salvage some measure of pre-eminence by promoting the interests of their close confederate, Lucio Blanco. The plot was actually initiated by a group of unscrupulous Americans, which Canova called the "Brownsville syndicate." The syndicate was headed by Frank W. Rabb, U.S. Customs

[43]Canova to State Department, November 6, 1914/13788.

[44]Canova to State Department, November 12, 1914/13923.

[45]Canova to State Department, November 10, 17, 1914/13924, 13935.

Collector at Brownsville, Texas; M. J. Slatter, publisher of a Brownsville newspaper; and Edwin Brodix of San Antonio. Canova thought that Senator Morris Sheppard of Texas might also be implicated. Although Canova did not suggest it in his despatches, the syndicate members may well have been acquainted with Blanco, Hay, and Villarreal for some time, since all three were from Northern Mexico. Although he only supposed that Hay and Villarreal were involved, the special agent claimed to have proof that Blanco was receiving financial support from the syndicate. In return, they expected land grants and business concessions from Blanco if he attained power.[46]

In September, Canova reported Rabb's presence in Mexico City but made no mention of the syndicate. In late October, Rabb came to Canova in Aguascalientes and hinted that the special agent would be richly rewarded if he used his influence with the members of the Convention to promote Blanco for the provisional presidency. According to his report of the episode, Canova declined to support Blanco. The syndicate, nonetheless, had continued to direct pro-Blanco propaganda at the delegates. After Gutiérrez was elected provisional president, the syndicate's plans changed. Hay and Villarreal supposedly became involved. Their scheme now called for Blanco to perform some act of heroism against Carranza that would

[46]Canova to Bryan, letter, November 12, 1914/27413.

endear him to the Conventionists; then, when Gutiérrez's temporary term expired, Blanco would be in a position to succeed him.[47]

After Carranza showed irrevocably that he would not support the Convention, Canova, although claiming that he was not a party to the Brownsville syndicate's machinations, decided, on his own, to encourage the conspirators as a means of eliminating the First Chief. Pointing out that Blanco's troops occupied Mexico City, the special agent suggested to Slattery and Brodix that their hero could demonstrate his devotion to the Convention by seizing Carranza and holding him hostage. The Carrancista opposition would, he hoped, falter, the convention would be grateful, and Blanco would certainly stand in line to succeed Gutiérrez as provisional president or, possibly better, be a logical candidate for the elective presidency. According to Canova's report of the incident, the two American conspirators left immediately for the capital. Carranza, meanwhile grew wary of Blanco and fled to

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[47] Ibid.; Canova to State Department, September 2, 1914/27409. In September, Canova assumed that Rabb was merely on vacation in Mexico. The special agent had even sent one of his lengthy reports to the border with Rabb. The syndicate's conspiracy may well have been operational at that time. In the month of September, Blanco played a critical role in persuading the other Carrancista generals to agree to the Convention of Aguascalientes. His subsequent actions revealed that he was extremely ambitious. See Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 84-85, 89.

Córdoba. The syndicate, nevertheless, continued to plot Blanco's rise to power.[48] The upshot of these fruitless connivances was to again point out to Washington how the personal ambitions of many of the Mexican leaders seemed to take precedence over statesmanship.

While Canova pilloried Carranza and his generals, he also extolled Villa's virtues, picturing him as the most stable influence in Mexico. "General Villa is the only individual who can put the country on a peaceful footing and establish confidence," he wrote to Bryan. "Were he to leave the country at this time, or before a duly

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[48] Canova to State Department, letter, November 12, 1914/27413. Before Bryan received the above letter, M. J. Slattery, Senator Sheppard, and one Henry Borden telegraphed Secretary of Treasury McAdoo, requesting that Customs Collector Rabb's leave-of-absence be extended. Each insisted that Rabb was performing invaluable service in promoting peace in Mexico. When McAdoo brought the matter to Bryan's attention, the Secretary of State replied that he knew of no service Rabb could provide in Mexico. See McAdoo to Bryan (conveying Sheppard to McAdoo, November 3, 1914; Borden to McAdoo, November 6, 1914; Slatter to McAdoo, November 8, 1914), November 9, 1914, and Bryan to McAdoo, November 11, 1914/13765. Later, Blanco asked Silliman to appeal for an extension of Rabb's leave. With Bryan absent from Washington, Acting Secretary of State Robert Lansing, handled the matter and did not request the customs collector's recall. Not until December, when Carothers became aware of Rabb's activities, did he and Canova request that Rabb's leave be cancelled. Even then the Treasury Department requested proof of wrongdoing before recalling him. See Silliman to State Department, November 14, 1914/13778; Lansing to McAdoo, November 16, 1914/ibid.; McAdoo to Lansing, November 23, 1914/13893; Carothers to State Department, December 9, 1914/13985; Bryan to McAdoo, December 10, 1914/ibid.; A. Peters, Assistant Secretary of Treasury, to Bryan, December 15, 1914/14035; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1779-80.

elected Administration is inaugurated in office, Mexico would witness, and be the victim of anarchy. . . ."[49] Canova also sanctioned the Conventionist war against Carranza. "Sometimes it is necessary that a painful surgical operation has to be undergone in order that the body may return to good health," he concluded. "And while I regret to say it, a clash of arms will be in the end the best thing for the country, for it will clarify the political atmosphere."[50]

More than Carothers, Canova had become Villa's champion in the State Department. More accurately reflecting the Administration's current attitude, Carothers remained noncommittal. He neither justified nor advocated the Conventionist, hence the Villista, cause. He merely reported the general's actions to Washington. When Carranza was declared a rebel, Carothers, in business-like fashion, informed Bryan that he had designated Canova to remain with Provisional President Gutiérrez, while he accompanied Villa and the Conventionist armies. In the process, he would see to the protection of foreign lives and property.[51]

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[49] Canova to State Department, letter, November 12, 1914/13923.

[50] Canova to State Department, November 16, 1914/13866.

[51] Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, November 4, 8, 11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 1914/13692, 13714, 13745, 13807, 13814, 13833, 13838.

Among the American agents, however, Carothers remained the main target of Carrancista rancor. Even before the Convention disowned the First Chief, the Constitutionalist agents in Washington issued a press release declaring that Carothers was trying to put Villa in power in order to secure large concessions for himself.[52] After the break, El Pueblo, one of Carranza's Mexico City organs, devoted its November 12 editorial section to an attack on Carothers. The column declared that he did not possess the qualities of a serious diplomat. He was merely an "intruder" who, under the protection of diplomatic immunity, was attempting to influence the Convention against Carranza and in favor of Villa. He was particularly condemned for having gone to Washington to plead Villa's case to Wilson and Bryan (the editorial failed to mention that Silliman had just returned from a similar mission in Carranza's behalf). Branding Carothers "an active agent of discord" and a "propagandist of rebellion," the editorial demanded his recall.[53] During the remainder of his service in Mexico, Carothers was a target of the Carrancista press.[54]

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[52]New York Times, October 29, 1914, p. 4; New York World, October 29, 1914.

[53]"Carothers," El Pueblo, November 12, 1914, p. 3.

[54]New York Herald, December 21, 1914; El Pueblo, January 9, 1915; El Democrata (Mexico City), September 8, 9, October 24, 28, 1915.

Only incidently did the Carrancistas criticize Canova. They accused him of allying with Carothers to present a far too optimistic view of the proceedings of Aguascalientes.[55] On the other hand, press comments concerning Special Agent Silliman were uniformly complimentary. On November 5, El Pueblo made it clear that Silliman did not share the views of the other agents in Mexico. Even during the negotiations for the evacuation of Vera Cruz, when Silliman was supposedly dictating Wilson's terms, he was depicted as a fair-minded diplomat. Perhaps hoping to induce the Wilson Administration to have Silliman join him again, Carranza personally sent word to El Sol that Silliman had always been impartial and just in his dealings with the Constitutionalists.[56]

As Villa mounted his campaign on Mexico City, the Carrancista generals made agonizing decisions. The Conventionist armies were larger and better equipped. Yet the near assassination of Obregón revealed that an alliance with Villa could be hazardous. The key figure was Obregón. He had worked diligently to promote peace among the revolutionary factions. He had been willing to support Gutiérrez until the provisional president turned Conventionist forces over to Villa. Chosing between the

[55]El Pueblo, October 26, November 4, 1914; New York World, November 20, 1914.

[56]El Pueblo, October 20, 30, November 5, 1914; El Sol, November 12, 23, 30, 1914.

lesser of two evils, Obregón sided with Carranza. González preceded him, and their decisions swayed others. Without their support, Carranza would have been no match for the Conventionists. As it turned out, he was a formidable foe.[57]

At the outset of the fighting, the First Chief's situation was precarious to say the least. His forces hemmed in at Córdoba and Puebla, he had no access to the North nor to the nearby port of Vera Cruz. Since mid-October he had remained immovable in his refusal to disavow punitive measures against the people of Vera Cruz. After his break with the Convention, prudence dictated that he give in to Wilson's demands. On November 9, he issued a proclamation of amnesty for all Mexicans who had served the American government in the port city. The next day, Fabela notified the Brazilian Minister that the Chamber of Commerce of Vera Cruz had circulated a petition among the commercial interests of the city which revealed that they were satisfied they would receive fair treatment from the Constitutionalists. Claiming that their action had been spontaneous, Fabela revealed that the First Chief had magnanimously agreed to levy no further duties in cases where they had already

[57]Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 123-26.

been paid.[58] Villa, meanwhile, sent word to Washington through Carothers that the port should be turned over to authorities designed by Gutiérrez.[59] Holding the port for the Conventionists was fraught with danger, because the Constitutionalists now looked upon the possession of the city as necessary to their very survival. The possibility of clashes between American and Constitutionalist troops, therefore, seemed a distinct possibility.

True to his recently adopted policy of non-entanglement, Wilson, on November 13, directed Bryan to send word to the Brazilian Minister, Carothers, and Canova, who, in turn, were to notify Carranza, Villa, and Gutiérrez that the United States would begin evacuating her troops from Vera Cruz in ten days. No authorities were designated to receive the port. Nothing more than an official notice of evacuation was given. Orders were sent to General Funston that he was to make no arrangements with representatives of any faction.[60] By early afternoon of

[58]Silliman to State Department, November 9, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 618; Oliveira to State Department, November 10, 1914, ibid., 618-20.

[59]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, November 10, 1914/13734.

[60]Wilson to Bryan, November 13, 1914/13766; State Department to Oliveira, Carothers, Canova, and various United States Embassies, November 13, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 621-22; War Department to Funston, November 20, 1914, ibid., 625.

November 23, the last troops had embarked, and, shortly thereafter, General Aguilar, who was lurking nearby, occupied the city in the name of the Constitutionalists. Carranza's possession of Vera Cruz proved a decisive factor in his war against the Conventionists. The city became the seat of his provisional government and the port proved invaluable as an access to outside sources of supply.[61]

With Villa driving relentlessly toward Mexico City, Carranza ordered his remaining troops evacuated on November 19. Since it was feared that looting and civil disorder would follow the evacuation of the Constitutionalist troops, Carranza's directive caused widespread alarm in the city. Silliman and Cardoso de Oliveira reported that the departing soldiers were doing their share of the looting. All the automobiles, horses, and any other items that the army could utilize were confiscated. The homes of the Constitutionalists' enemies were systematically sacked. More frightening than the looting by the Constitutionalists, was the prospect of a hun-like decent upon the city by the Zapatistas, who were already occupying the suburbs. On the 20th, Carrancista officials invited the diplomatic corps to follow the retreating armies of Puebla; otherwise, the Constitutionalists would accept no responsibility

[61]Quirk, An Affair of Honor, 169-70.

for their safety. Realizing that such a move would imply at least moral support of Carranza, the diplomatic corps unanimously declined the invitation.[62]

Causing further alarm, rumor spread that Villa and Zapata had promised their troops two hours of unrestricted looting upon capturing Mexico City. Although Silliman and Cardoso de Oliveira suspected the fleeing Constitutionalists of spreading the rumor in order to discredit their opponents, Acting Secretary of State Lansing directed Carothers to look into the matter. The special agent promptly replied that Villa had issued orders to the effect that anyone caught looting or molesting civilians would be executed on on the spot. Carothers further revealed that Villa was maintaining excellent order in the cities and towns he occupied.[63]

The ever-ambitious Lucio Blanco, after listening to the pleas of Silliman and Oliveira, defied the orders of Carranza and Obregón and agreed to remain behind in the capital city to insure order until the Conventionists

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[62] Silliman to State Department, November 19 (two), 20 (two), 21, 1914/13829, 13832, 13844, 13848, 13854; Oliveira to State Department, November 20 (two), 1914/13845, 13849.

[63] Oliveira to State Department, November 20, 21, 1914/13845, 13863; State Department to Carothers, November 21, 1914/13845; Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, November 21, 25, 1914/13856, 13906; Carothers to State Department, December 16, 1914/14061.

arrived. No doubt still looking for any opportunity to establish a reputation for gallantry, his courage ultimately failed him as attacks by the Zapatistas intensified, and he, too, evacuated the hapless city. Retiring to Toluca, Blanco maintained a precarious neutrality for about a week before casting his lot with the Convention.[64]

Apprehension got the best of Silliman as well. Admitting that he had "been able to accomplish very little with Carranza," the special agent still believed he should rejoin the First Chief. The Brazilian Minister, anticipating an increase in his activities with the arrival of the Conventionists, recommended to Washington that Silliman be retained in Mexico City to aid in the work of the Brazilian Legation. Considering all of Cardoso de Oliveira's work in behalf of the United States, Secretary of State Bryan was pleased to partially repay the Minister for his efforts by directing Silliman to remain in Mexico City.[65]

On the evening of November 24, the Zapatistas began

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[64]Silliman to State Department, November 21, 23, 24 (two), 1914/13854, 13895, 13881, 13888; Oliveira to State Department, November 24, 1914/13858; Silliman to State Department, November 22, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 625-26.

[65]Canada (for Silliman) to State Department, November 24, 1914/13886; Oliveira to State Department, November 25, 1914, and State Department to Oliveira, November 27, 1914, NA 125.8273/131.

occupying the capital. A commisssion sent by Minister Cardoso de Oliveira was assured that order would be maintained. Contrary to expectations, the Zapatistas were more timid than fearsome. Allene Tupper Wilkes, daughter of Dr. Henry Allen Tupper of the International Peace Forum, who was present at the time, wrote that the soldiers from the South, instead of looting, went quietly from door to door begging for food. There were a few incidents of violence. A disagreement flared between some soldiers and the police. The Zapatistas being country folk, and fearing that they were being attacked by a machine of war, fired on a fire engine as it clanged down a dark street. For the most part, the city was quiet and order reigned.[66]

Zapata, himself, arrived in the capital on the 26th. Ever wary, he remained near the railway station and refused to even go to ceremonies held in his honor at the National Palace. Silliman personally called upon the revolutionary chieftain and thanked him for the peaceful conditions enjoyed by the city's inhabitants. Zapata was most cordial, and prospects for friendly relations seemed good. But on

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[66]Canada (for Silliman) to State Department, November 24, 1914/13888; Silliman to State Department, November 25, 30, 1914/13896, 13939; Oliveira to State Department, November 25, 27, 1914/13898, 13919; Allene Tuper Wilkes, "The Gentle Zapatistas," Harper's Weekly, LX (January 16, 1915), 56-57; New York Times, November 25, 1914, p. 1; Ramírez Plancarte, La Ciudad de México, 255-56.

the 28th, as Villa's armies approached, Zapata again disappeared into his mountain retreat.[67]

Bryan was cheered by the recent events in Mexico City. "The situation seems to be clearing up . . . ," he wrote to the President. Assuming that the Conventionists would make short work of Carranza and that Gutiérrez's government would soon be the power to reckon with, Bryan recommended that a note be sent to the provisional president, offering congratulations and restating the position of the United States on the matter of protection of foreign interests and the granting of amnesty to political enemies. Wilson refused to be drawn into even the slightest association with the Conventionists. He told Bryan that such a note should be sent only "through some person known to be persona grata to those now in charge of affairs in Mexico City and who can convey it confidentially and unofficially."[68] Gutiérrez received no encouragement from Washington.

By December 1, Villa was on the outskirts of Mexico

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[67] Silliman to State Department, November 30, 1914/13939; Oliveira to State Department, November 29, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 627; El Pueblo (Vera Cruz), December 3, 1914. The staff of El Pueblo evacuated Mexico City along with the Carrancista forces and re-established in Vera Cruz as the principal organ of the Constitutionalist faction.

[68] Bryan to Wilson, December 2, 1914, and Wilson to Bryan, December 3, 1914, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence.

City, in Tacuba. There, Carothers, who accompanied Villa, and Canova, who accompanied Gutiérrez and the Permanent Commission chosen by the Convention, were reunited. The two American agents immediately entered the city to establish liaison with the Brazilian Minister. In a meeting with Cardoso de Oliveira and Silliman, it was agreed that each agent would have a specific sphere of authority. Carothers was to handle matters involving Villa, while Canova was to continue making representations to Gutiérrez and the Permanent Commission of the Convention. Cardoso de Oliveira was to be informed of and acceded to all important decisions. When Gutiérrez chose a Foreign Minister, Cardoso de Oliveira would conduct official relations between Washington and the Convention. Silliman was to remain at the disposal of the Brazilian Legation.[69]

These matters having been decided, Carothers and Canova were presented to the diplomatic corps at a reception given by Minister Cardoso de Oliveira. The diplomats were unanimous in their concern for the continued peace of the capital. The currently quiet conditions had not overcome Villa and Zapata's blood-thirsty reputations. The ministers complained that there

[69] Oliveira to State Department, December 1, 1914, NA 125.36582/114; Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, December 5, 1914/13965; Canova to State Department, December 8, 1914/14048.

were still rumors current that Villa and Zapata planned murder, pillage, and rape upon entering the city in force. The two American agents assured the diplomats that their fears were unfounded, but added that they would again appeal to the two generals for renewed guarantees of clemency.[70]

The next day, Carothers went on a mission for Villa, an action that was more characteristic of his past activities. He joined Roque González Garza, who also represented Villa, and two Zapatistas who had accompanied Villa from Aguascalientes, in journeying to Cuernavaca. Their purpose was to draw Zapata out of his stronghold. Until now, Villa had not coordinated his military effort with Zapata's. As a result, the chieftain of the South had become wary of Villa. He feared that the Conventionists might occupy Mexico City as Carranza had in August and completely ignore the interests of the people of the South. Carothers and González Garza hoped to dispell those fears. After being cordially received, they presented Zapata with a letter from Villa and attempted to persuade him that he would be safe in Mexico City. Zapata told Carothers that Villa alone, among the revolutionary leaders, had ever commanded his slightest confidence. Still he refused to leave his sanctuary altogether. He would agree only to hold a preliminary

[70]Ibid.; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1775.

conference with Villa in Xochimilco at the edge of his domain.[71] It was the first time that anyone had been able to coax Zapata out of his mountains.

Canova, meanwhile, accompanied Gutiérrez and Villa into Mexico City. They entered with no fanfare, and few people even knew that Villa was present. This was as Villa wanted it. He did not want to alienate Zapata by giving the slightest appearance of occupying the city. He remained only to attend the ceremony establishing Gutierrez and the Permanent Commission in the National Palace, then he retired to Tacuba.[72]

On December 4, both Carothers and Canova took part in one of the most dramatic and picturesque events of the entire revolution, the first meeting of Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata. In a borrowed automobile, the two agents motored out to Xochimilco. Upon arriving they found no activity. Fearful that the conference had been abandoned, they sped back toward Mexico City. While en route, they came upon Villa and his party leisurely trotting along on horseback, taking in the scenery as they

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[71] Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, December 6, 1914/13966; Carothers to State Department, December 16, 1914/14061; El Monitor (Mexico City), December 6, 1914; El Paso Morning Times, December 8, 1914.

[72] Cobb (for Canova) to State Department, December 7, 8, 1914/13974, 14048; El Monitor, December 4, 1914.

went. When they arrived in the city of the floating gardens at midday, a great throng had gathered to see the two already legendary leaders. The city was brightly decorated, and well-drilled school children sang songs of welcome. Zapata greeted Villa warmly. He was deeply appreciative that Villa had ventured into Zapatista territory. The Centaur of the North treated him as an equal, quite a change from the treatment Zapata had received from Carranza.[73]

The two Americans joined in the conference held in the municipal school building. Canova reported that, at first, Villa and Zapata "sat in an embarrassed silence, occasionally broken by some insignificant remark, like two country sweethearts." Finally, someone called Carranza an old "cabrón." The ice broken, the room errupted with profanity. Canova captured the color of the meeting. His characterizations are well worth quoting in length. Pointing out the distinct contrast between the two chieftains, the special agent noted:

> General Villa, tall, robust, weighing about 180 pounds, with a complexion almost as florid as a German, was wearing an English (pith) helmet, a heavy brown sweater, khaki trousers, leggings and heavy riding shoes. Zapata to his left, with his immense sombrero shading his eyes so that they could not be seen, had a dark

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[73]Canova to State Department, December 8, 1914/14048; El Monitor, December 5, 1914; Womack, Zapata, 220. Edgcomb Pinchon, Zapata the Unconquerable (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1941), 298-300.

> complexion, thin face, a man much shorter in stature than Villa and weighing about 130 pounds. He wore a short black coat, a large blue silk neckerchief, pronounced lavender shirt and used alternately a white hankerchief with a green border and another with all the colors of the flowers. He had on a pair of black, tight-fitting Mexican trousers with silver buttons down the outside seam of each leg . . . Sitting in the semi-circle as we were, and watching every play of his [Villa's] and Zapata's countenance, I could not but measure Villa as the highest type of warrior, a man of great energy and unbounded self-confidence. Zapata . . . seemed to be studying Villa all the time . . . He is an idealist. One may say a dreamer, like the ill-fated Jose Martí of Cuba . . . One wonders in looking at him where his qualities of a leader are hidden, but it seems to have been his honesty of purpose, his constancy to the interests of his people and his unfailing kindness to them, which have made him the great leader he is. . . .[74]

After they had dined, the two leaders retired to an adjoining room for a private conference, at which time they agreed on future military campaigns against Carranza.[75] When Carothers considered that enough time had elapsed for adequate exchange of expressions, he entered the room. With no current instructions from Washington to guide him, the special agent let his past

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[74]Canova to State Department, December 8, 1914/14048. The passage quoted above, plus other portions of Canova's report, are often quoted or cited. For example, see Link, The Struggle For Neutrality, 264; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 135-36; Womack, Zapata, 220-21; Atkin, Revolution: Mexico, 1910-1920, 232-33.

[75]"Pacto de Xochimilco," González Ramírez, Planes Políticos y otros documentos, 113-21.

experience be his guide. He told the revolutionary chieftains that "the world was watching their actions" and that "the peace of Mexico depended upon their joint co-operation." He also intimated that they could expect the continued friendship of the United States. The two generals, in turn, expressed their gratitude for the moral support that they had received. They insisted that they expected no other form of assistance and would attempt to vindicate Wilson's faith in their previous efforts. They also revealed that their armies would enter Mexico City jointly on December 6, and pledged that it would be a peaceful occupation. The American agents were relieved. Ever optimistic, Canova reported to Bryan that the union affected at Xochimilco offered "great promise for the early establishment of peace in Mexico."[76] Receiving an Associated Press account of the Xochimilco conference even before the reports of his agents, Bryan was equally optimistic. He again proclaimed to President Wilson that the end of their troubles in Mexico seemed to be in sight.[77]

At first, Bryan's optimism seemed justified. On the 6th, Villa and Zapata, side-by-side, at the head of their

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[76]Canova to State Department, December 8, 1914/14048; Carothers to State Department, December 16, 1914/14061.

[77]Bryan to Wilson, December 7, 1914, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 69.

unified armies, made their triumphal entry into the capital. Both Carothers, who worked to promote the union, and Canova, who so ably described the chieftains' first encounter, did not witness the colorful procession. Both were ill, Carothers delirious with fever from a severe case of tonsillitis, Canova with a bad cold. The historian could well use an eye-witness account of the entry which might have come from Canova's pen. Fortunately, photographers caught the scenes for posterity.[78] From Accounts of the entry that reached them, the two agents were able to determine that it was entirely peaceful. When Carothers was well enough, he made an investigation and found that the populace of the city was welcoming the Conventionist armies with open arms.[79]

On December 10, Villa sent word to Carothers that he was leaving for the North. Still quite ill, Carothers struggled to his rail car and made the journey. As they

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[78]Oliveira to State Department, December 9, 1914, NA 125.36582/116; Cobb (for Carothers), December 15, 1914/14017. Canova did prepare a brief account of the entry which he reconstructed second-hand. See Canova to State Department, December 8, 1914/14048. Photographs of the Villa-Zapata entry into Mexico City, and the even more famous ones of Villa sitting on the presidential throne in the National Palace, with Zapata by his side, have been reproduced in numerous publications. By far the most complete photographic account appears in Casasola's invaluable photographic history of the Mexican Revolution. See Historia Gráfica, II, 940-48.

[79]Carothers to State Department, December 16, 1914/14061.

traveled northward, Villa informed the special agent of his and Zapata's plans for the defeat of Carranza. The Conventionist forces were to be divided into three armies: one under Cabral, to clean up Sonora; one under Zapata, to take Puebla and Vera Cruz; and his own, to conquer all northeastern Mexico, including Monterrey, Saltillo, Tampico, and Matamoros. The months of riding in a converted boxcar had taken their toll of Carothers' health. On the advice of his physician, he requested a two-week leave of absence. In doing so, he assured Bryan that "nothing of importance" would happen before January 1.[80]

Carothers was allowed no respite. Upon his arrival in El Paso, he was directed to proceed to Naco on the Sonora-Arizona border to attempt to end the strife that had raged there since September.[81] During the months in which Governor Maytorena beseiged General Hill in the small border town, a number of Americans had been killed or wounded by stray bullets that crossed the border. The War Department, meanwhile, sent some 5000 troops under the command of General Tasker H. Bliss to watch over the troubled area.[82] On December 9, Bryan addressed

[80] Ibid.; Carothers to State Department, December 16, 1914, NA 125.36582/117.

[81] Carothers to State Department, December 17, 1914/14030. No copy of orders to Carothers was found, only his acknowledgement of receipt of the orders.

[82] Clendenen, United States and Pancho Villa, 141-42.

identical notes to Carranza and Gutierrez, warning that unless the firing across the border ceased, the U. S. Army would "take such steps as may be necessary to protect American lives. . . ."[83] Gutiérrez immediately wired Maytorena to do everything possible, including the suspension of hostilities, if necessary, to prevent further firing across the border. In characteristic fashion, Carranza denied any responsibility. He claimed that the Carrancista troops, with their backs to the border, were not firing at the United States. He also denied that there was any justification for United States involvement in the Naco affair.[84]

Carothers' job, then, was to secure a cease-fire agreement from the local commanders. The special agent conferred at length with Maytorena on December 18. Maytorena, anxious to avoid a clash with American troops, suggested that he withdraw his forces five or ten miles inland from Naco and that the port of Naco, Arizona, be closed to General Hill. Without access to supplies from across the border, Maytorena revealed, the Carrancistas would be forced to evacuate the town. With Hill being

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[83]State Department to Canada and Silliman, December 9, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 649.

[84]Silliman to State Department (conveying copy of Gutierrez to Maytorena, December 10, 1914), December 10, 1914, ibid., 649-50; Zubarán Capmany to State Department, December 12, 1914, ibid., 650-51; Canada to State Department, December 13, 1914/13997.

forced inland for supplies, the fighting between the two forces would take place away from the border. Since General Bliss endorsed this move, Carothers recommended that the port of Naco be closed.[85] Bryan also endorsed Carothers' suggestion. Although Wilson expressed sympathy for such a policy, he wrote to Bryan that he was not certain that he had the legal right to close the port on such a pretext.[86] Whereas months before he would have cast aside such legal subtleties, he now insisted upon consulting the law before taking action.

While Bryan looked into the legality of the matter, General Hugh L. Scott, who had also been ordered to the border to aid in arranging a cease-fire, joined Carothers, and on December 24, they announced that they had negotiated a satisfactory settlement.[87] Carrancista generals Hill and Calles, as well as the First Chief's personal representative, Roberto V. Pesqueira, signed the agreement, but Maytorena refused, claiming that he first had to have orders from Provisional President Gutiérrez. Both Gutiérrez and Villa signified their acceptance of the

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[85]Carothers to State Department, December 19, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 652-53; El Paso Morning Times, December 19, 1914.

[86]Bryan to Wilson, December 21, 1914, and Wilson to Bryan, December 23, 1914, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence.

[87]Scott to War Department, December 24, 1914/14100.

arrangement, but Maytorena still hedged. Through Felix Sommerfeld, one of Villa's commercial agents on the border, Scott even secured a special order from Villa, directing Maytorena to evacuate the border town. On December 26, Maytorena began withdrawing his forces, but he either could not control his Yaqui Indian troops or only started the evacuation as a ruse. When some of Hill's troops moved out into the open, they were fired upon. By December 30, the seige was on again in earnest.[88]

On January 2, Villa announced that he would settle the matter once and for all. Through Sommerfeld, he notified Scott and Carothers that 8000 troops were on their way to Naco and, if they were allowed eight hours of fighting, would take the border town. Although both the Americans felt friendly toward Villa, they knew that such a battle would likely result in more shooting across the border. Scott, therefore, requested Carothers to urge Villa, who had returned to Mexico City, to personally come to the border and negotiate a cease-fire. On January 3, Carothers notified Washington that Villa had agreed to

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[88] Ibid.; Scott to Mrs. Scott, December 26, 27, 1914, Scott Papers, Box 4; Scott to Mrs. Scott, January 1, 1915, ibid., Box 5; Enrique Llorente, Confidential Agent of the Provisional Government of Mexico (Convention) to State Department, December 26, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 654.

come.[89]

Villa was absenting himself from Mexico City at a critical time. While he was in the North, arranging his future military campaigns, conditions in the capital changed drastically. Zapata had also vacated the city to begin preparations for his attack on Puebla. Mexico City was left in the hands of their more ruthless henchmen, who immediately began a wholesale liquidation of political enemies. On December 14, Canova reported that as many as 150 had already been executed.[90] When, at Bryan's request, Silliman urged Gutiérrez to end the executions, the Provisional President replied that he had not authorized them, that the Villistas and the Zapatistas had not consulted him first.[91] It was also apparent that he could no nothing to halt them.

The purge was only one of several incidents which made Gutiérrez realize that Villa and Zapata intended to do as they pleased, regardless of whom had been delegated authority by the Convention. He had no army of his own,

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[89]Scott to Mrs. Scott, January 1, 1915, Scott Papers, Box 5; Happer (for Scott) to Carothers, January 3, 1915, ibid., Box 16; Carothers to State Department, January 3, 1915/14128.

[90]Silliman to State Department, December 12, 1914/13999; Canova to State Department, December 14, 15, 1914/14008, 14018.

[91]Bryan to Silliman, December 13, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 628-29; Silliman to State Department, December 15, 1914/14019.

no means of compelling them to submit to his will. Seeking an escape from his dilemma, Gutiérrez renewed communication with Obregón, González, and other Constitutionalist generals. He urged them to join him in organizing another convention in San Luis Potosí which would eliminate Villa, Zapata, and Carranza. Since he was not at all secretive about his plans, Villa got wind of them in Guadalajara, where he was planning a campaign into Jalisco. Returning to the capital, he at first put Gutiérrez under close surveillance, then quarreled violently with him, and ultimately placed him under house arrest. As usual, Villa's rage did not last long. With the intercession of General José I. Robles, he and Gutiérrez were apparently reconciled. When Villa departed for the border to join Carothers and Scott, he seemed to have matters under control.[92]

Having set things in order in Mexico City, Villa arrived in Juárez on January 8, 1915. He had a friendly chat with Scott and Carothers that evening on the international bridge between El Paso and Juárez. The next day, at a formal conference held in El Paso, Villa again tried to persuade the American negotiators to allow him to make a lightning attack on Naco and Agua Prieta after

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[92]Silliman to State Department, December 23, 26, 29, 30, 31, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 634-35; Silliman to State Department, December 22, 28, 1914/14070, 14095.

first giving American citizens an opportunity to withdraw a safe distance away. When Scott replied that he could not accede to such a proposal, Villa insisted that the United States was being unreasonable. Carothers and Scott held fast and their perserverance paid off. Later that day, they persuaded Villa to direct Maytorena to sign the agreement made in December. All parties were to evacuate Naco. The Carrancistas were allowed to occupy Agua Prieta, nearby to the East. Maytorena might occupy Nogales, on the border west of Naco. Neither side was to attack the other in its border bastion. On January 11, Scott and Carothers brought together Maytorena and General Calles, who had replaced Hill, to sign the formal agreement. The evacuation of Naco began shortly thereafter.[93]

Whatever Wilson's motives, his non-involvement policy had done nothing to diminish Villa's ascendancy. However coarse Villa's methods, he had proved his resourcefulness and his continued willingness to cooperate with American officials. If Wilson's policy was designed to give Villa

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[93]Scott to Mrs. Scott, January 9, 11, 1915, Scott Papers, Box 5; Carothers to State Department, January 9, 1915, U.S. Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1915 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1924), 789; Agreement of January 11, 1915, between Governor Maytorena and General Calles, ibid., 789-90; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1776; El Paso Morning Times, January 9, 10, 1915; Scott, Some Memories of a Soldier, 505-13.

a chance to prove himself, the strongman from Chihuahua certainly presented a facade of success. But many Mexicans, some who had trusted and supported him, were beginning to look beneath the veneer and abhor what they saw. The seeds of discord he had sown by his high-handed methods in Mexico City were already bearing bitter fruit. Although he appeared to be at his zenith—a position he gained with the help of the United States—his power was already declining.

CHAPTER XI

A STEADY DISINTEGRATION

In his Jackson Day address delivered at Indianapolis on January 8, 1915, Wilson re-affirmed his policy of non-involvement in Mexico. In terms that would later give so much hope to millions in Europe, he proclaimed: "I hold it is a fundamental principle . . . that every people has the right to determine its own form of government . . . ." Insisting that the revolutionaries in Mexico were slowly working toward that end, he further declared: "And so far as my influence goes, while I am President nobody shall interfere with them."[1] Wilson probably meant each of these words when he spoke them. But at the time, conditions in Mexico seemed to be vindicating his non-involvement policy. Within a very short time, conditions deteriorated and the President's policy was repeatedly put to the test.

The special agents were inextricably involved in the events that marked this deterioration. The system of diplomatic representation in Mexico caused the Administration numerous difficulties during the early months of

[1] New York Times, January 9, 1915, p. 4.

1915. Only in George Carothers did the State Department have an agent who carried on effective relations with a Mexican leader. Carothers understood Villa's moods. He knew when best to confront the general directly and when to use the services of influential intermediaries, such as General Scott and certain Villa subordinates. The total result was that Villa continued to express a willingness to cooperate with the Wilson Administration.[2]

Villa did cause anxious moments. However strong he appeared to be during the early months of 1915, he was operating at a disadvantage. The Constitutionalists commanded greater financial resources because they controlled the ports of Vera Cruz and Tampico, along with the oil fields surrounding the latter. Villa depended solely on income from the sale of confiscated goods and taxes, particularly those on mining properties. As the civil war intensified, the number of depredatory incidents in Northern Mexico involving foreigners increased. Repeatedly Carothers was called upon by the State Department to make representations in their behalf, and,

[2]Among other things, Villa evidenced his friendship for the United States by revealing to Carothers that the Japanese were trying to line up alliances in Mexico which they could call upon for support in case of war between the United States and Japan. He told General Scott the same thing when they met at El Paso in early January. See Carothers to Bryan, personal, February 5, 1915, Bryan Papers, Box 43; Scott to Carothers, February 23, 1915, Scott Papers, Box 17; Carothers to Scott, March 26, 1915, ibid.

usually, Villa responded favorably.[3]

The civil war, by causing many of the mines to close, ultimately cut off such a share of income that Villa was forced to take drastic steps. On March 19, he decreed that all mining property abandoned in Northern Mexico, if not reclaimed and put into operation within four months, would be confiscated. Those mine operators whose taxes were in arrears were given ninety days to pay in full.[4] With the foreign-owned mining industry up in arms over the decree, Bryan directed Carothers to remind Villa that many of the mines had been abandoned, and the miners forced to flee, because of the dangers presented by the civil war. Easing fears slightly, Villa revealed that the decree was not designed to hurt legitimate mine operators. He told Carothers that it was meant to prevent speculators from taking advantage of the war by purchasing abandoned mines at a fraction of their values and later attempting to sell them to Mexican investors at an undeserved profit. When this reply did not satisfy Bryan,

[3]Carothers to State Department, January 2, 7, March 18, 1915/14130, 14160, 14731; Cobb (for Carothers), March 18, 1915/14626; State Department to Carothers, February 5, 1915, NA 125.1236/22; Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, February 12, 1915, ibid./25. For representative cases involving forced loans levied against foreigners and satisfactory settlements of these problems, see Foreign Relations, 1915, 983-96.

[4]Mining decree issued by Francisco Villa at Monterey, March 19, 1915, ibid., 894-95.

Carothers was again directed to press for repeal of the decree. Villa ultimately capitulated. He told the American agent that the decree would not be enforced until he could guarantee transportation facilities for the miners. Villa also assured Carothers that he would not allow the decree to cause any international embarrassments for the United States.[5]

The other agents did not enjoy such success. John Silliman, who was never very effective in his relations with Carranza, was no longer even attached to the First Chief's headquarters. He remained in Mexico City, assisting the Brazilian Minister. Leon Canova, the only State Department agent who ever rivaled Carothers in effectiveness, forfeited his potential influence with members of the Convention when the Department involved him in attempts to save the lives of some of the Mexicans being purged by the Villistas and Zapatistas. Both Canova and Silliman were directed to appeal for the lives of all political prisoners, but the case that most attracted Bryan's attention was that of Eduardo Iturbide. It may be recalled that Iturbide, as Governor of the Federal District, had arranged the transfer of Mexico City into the hands of the Constitutionalists following

[5]State Department to Carothers, April 7, 15, 1915, ibid., 895-96, 899; Carothers to State Department, April 12, 16, 1915, ibid., 899, 901.

the fall of Huerta. At the urging of the diplomatic corps, he again assumed control of the city after the Carrancistas evacuated in late-November. In both instances, he had done much to maintain order and had earned the gratitude of the foreign colony. Upon entering the city, the Zapatistas showed no gratitude for his efforts. Instead, they charged him with crimes against the peasant population of Morelos, including the execution of some laborers on his hacienda and the impressment of many others into Huerta's army.[6]

Canova was not immediately involved. In fact, Iturbide took refuge in the home of a British subject, H. A. Cunard Cummins, where Carothers was also staying. Presenting Carothers with a testimonial signed by members of the diplomatic corps, the British Charge' d'Affaires, Thomas B. Hohler, urged the special agent to intercede in Iturbide's behalf. Luckily, Carothers was never implicated in the affair. Shortly after Iturbide sought asylum, the American agent left the city with Villa.[7] Bryan then directed Silliman to "do everything in your

[6]State Department to Silliman, December 8, 1914, NA 312.12/94a; Silliman to State Department, December 14, 1914/14010; El Paso Morning Times, December 23, 1914; New York World, December 24, 1914.

[7]Oliveira to State Department, December 9, 1914, NA 312.12/95; Carothers to State Department, December 26, 1914, ibid./164.

power to save Iturbide."[8] Bryan's determination to protect Iturbide was predicated, no doubt, by reports from Cardoso de Oliveira and Silliman to the effect that the charges against the former Mexican official were not valid and that he was being persecuted for political reasons. Certain that Iturbide would not receive a fair trial, they claimed that he was incapable of the crimes attributed to him by the Zapatistas.[9]

Interpreting his instructions liberally, Silliman, along with Cardoso de Oliveira and Hohler, first planned to send Iturbide to Vera Cruz in the company of John W. Belt, Silliman's assistant who had recently been granted a leave. This plan was foiled when Cardoso de Oliveira and Silliman took Conventionist Secretary of War José I. Robles into their confidence and asked that Iturbide be granted a salvo conducto (safe conduct passport). Sympathetic but not willing to risk involvement, Robles refused.[10] Assuming that Silliman, who was not attached to any faction, was the one to conduct the unfortunate Mexican to safety, Canova used his influence with the

[8]State Department to Silliman, December 13, 1914, Foreign Relations, 1914, 628-29.

[9]Oliveira to State Department, December 9, 1914, NA 312.12/95; Silliman to State Department, December 16, 1914, ibid./100.

[10]Silliman to State Department, December 9, 1914, and State Department to Silliman, December 11, 1914, ibid., 125.8273; Silliman to State Department, December 16 (two), 1914, ibid., 312.12/100, 104; Canova to State Department, December 16, 1914/14097.

Conventionists to secure salvo conductos for Silliman and an unnamed friend. According to Canova's report of the incident, this plan fell through because Silliman lacked the courage to carry it through.[11]

With Silliman faltering and Bryan appealing for someone to help Iturbide, Minister Cardoso de Oliveira took matters in hand. He asked Canova to escort Iturbide to the border. Securing salvo conductos directly from Provisional President Gutiérrez, who was sickened by the purge, Canova spirited Iturbide aboard a north-bound train early in the morning of December 22. When the departure was delayed, Canova went to the loading platform to inquire about the difficulty. There he came face to face with General Villa. Covering his nervousness, the special agent struck up a conversation. Villa asked Canova where he was going. When the agent replied that he was going to the border to get his wife, Villa insisted that, upon their return to Mexico City, they should dine with him. Thus, Canova left Mexico City still on the best of terms with the Conventionist leaders.[12]

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[11] Silliman to State Department, December 19, 21, 1914, ibid./106, 108; Oliveira to State Department, December 22, 1914, ibid./115; Canova to State Department, December 27, 1914, ibid./131; Canova to State Department, December 20, 1914/27415.

[12] State Department to Silliman, December 17, 1914, NA 312.12/103; Oliveira to State Department, December 22, 1914, ibid./115; Silliman to State Department, December 22, 1914, ibid./112; Canova to State Department, December

Canova was no sooner out of the capital than the storm broke. The day of his departure, it was common knowledge that he and Iturbide were on their way to El Paso. Silliman blamed Canova's indiscreet relations with reporters for the exposure, but Silliman was just as likely at fault. Unwilling to approach them himself, he had asked a reporter friend, John W. Roberts of the El Paso Times, to intercede with the Zapatistas for Iturbide's safety. Roberts, who often mingled with the agents, was not always candid in his dealings with them. The very day of Canova's departure, Roberts filed his story on the escape. It was accurate in almost every detail.[13]

The Zapatistas were furious at Iturbide's escape. The most vocal among them was Manuel Palafox, who served virtually as Zapata's secretary of state, but who currently was the Conventionist Secretary of Agriculture. Without

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20, 1914/27415; New York Sun, December 28, 1914. Canova started his letter on December 20, but did not complete it until December 23, as his train approached Zacatecas.

[13]Silliman to State Department, December 21 (two), 1914, NA 312.12/108, 110; El Paso Morning Times, December 23. 1914. An intimate of Carothers, Canova, and Silliman, Roberts witnessed and reported much of their activity. In August, 1916, during the Presidential election campaign, he tried to sell his information to the Republican National Committee. If the Committee chose to attack the Wilson Administration's Mexican policy, he claimed that he could provide a great deal of information concerning the activities of the special agents. See Roberts to G. R. Scrugham, August 29, 1916, Albert B. Fall Papers, microfilm copies, Zimmermann Library, University of New Mexico, Reel no. 33.

consulting Gutiérrez, he issued orders for Iturbide to be removed from the northbound train and returned to stand trial. At the same time, he issued a statement to the press, condemning Silliman and Canova and charging that each had received a 500,000 peso bribe from Iturbide. After consulting with Palafox, Villa, too, sent an order for Iturbide's arrest.[14]

Canova's and Iturbide's experiences as they traveled northward could scarcely have been more exciting had they been fabricated in the mind of a dime novelist. Soldiers and secret police repeatedly attempted to enter their compartment. Each time Canova feigned ignorance of Iturbide's whereabouts and claimed diplomatic immunity to prevent entry. Claiming further that upholding the dignity of his country prevented him from submitting to a search, he warned of the dire consequences that would result from forceful entry and maltreatment of a representative of the United States Government. Thoroughly terror-stricken by the time the train approached Chihuahua, Iturbide decided to leave the train and strike off on his own. When the train was again stopped

[14] Silliman to State Department, December 23, 1914, NA 312.12/117; Oliveira to State Department, December 24 (two), 1914, ibid./119, 120; El Paso Morning Times, December 23, 25, 1914; New York World, December 24, 27, 1914. Silliman suspected Roberts of being responsible for the bribery charge.

just south of Chihuahua, Iturbide made his escape through a window under the cover of darkness, while Canova shouted warnings through the closed compartment door.[15]

When Canova was informed in Chihuahua that the car in which he was riding would be detached and left for repairs, the special agent made no protest and serenely exited his compartment. Astonished when they did not find Iturbide, the soldiers declared the car to be fit to continue the journey. After again lecturing the searchers on the necessity of upholding the dignity of his government, Canova continued on to Juárez in the same compartment. At Juárez, reporters were also astonished to find that Iturbide was not accompanying Canova. The special agent gave the press a detailed account of his trip, emphasizing every indignity that he had endured but steadfastly denying that Iturbide had ever been with him.[16]

On December 29, the New York Times reported on good authority that Canova had, indeed, aided Iturbide's escape, and, by January 2, it was known in El Paso that Iturbide had safely crossed the border near Presidio,

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[15]Canova to State Department, December 20, 29, 1914/27415, 27418; El Paso Morning Times, December 28, 1914; New York Times, December 28, 1914, p. 4.

[16]Canova to State Department, December 28, 29, 30, 1914/27417, 27418, 27419; El Paso Morning Times, December 27, 1914; New York World, December 29, 1914.

Texas.[17] Villa knew very well what had happened. At Gómez Palacio, during his perilous journey northward, Canova conferred with Carothers and asked him to plead with Villa by wire to uphold the salvo conductos. Incorrectly assuming that Villa would sustain his actions, Canova told Carothers to be completely candid with the general. Contrary to expectations, Villa did not uphold the salvo conductos. Instead he continued to condemn Canova's complicity in Iturbide's escape. At first, Carothers did not take Villa seriously. He reported to Bryan that Villa had probably condemned Canova in order to mollify the Zapatistas.[18] Even Canova did not take Villa seriously. He wrote to Bryan that he believed the episode would serve to enhance his reputation for bravery in Villa's eyes. Villa, he assumed, would applaud acts of gallantry regardless of what prompted them. "I really believe General Villa will chuckle over the whole matter," he concluded.[19]

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[17]New York Times, December 29, 1914, p. 1; El Paso Morning Times, January 2, 1915. Before leaving the train, Iturbide told Canova that he planned to hire a horse and guide and make for the border near Presidio. Canova learned that Iturbide crossed the border on December 31. Appearing incognito in El Paso shortly afterward, Iturbide took a train to the East Coast of the United States. See Canova to State Department, January 1, 4, 1915, NA 312.12/150, 157.

[18]Carothers to State Department, December 26, 1914, January 8, 1915, ibid./164, 174; Canova to State Department, December 29, 1914/27418.

[19]Canova to State Department, December 30, 1914/27419.

Both agents were wrong. Villa continued to denounce Canova and demand his recall. He remained immovable even to explanations that the special agent had merely acted on orders from his superiors. Carothers made another appeal when the general came north to settle the problems at Naco. Villa softened his attitude somewhat in Carothers' presence, but suggested that feelings were running so strongly against Canova in Mexico City that, if he returned, embarrassing and potentially dangerous incidents would likely result. Although Canova still requested permission to return to his duties, Bryan directed him to come to Washington for reassignment.[20] Thus, the Department lost one of its agents in Mexico.

Minister Cardoso de Oliveira was disappointed at losing Canova's services, especially since he was the only one with influence among the Conventionists. "[I] have not enough words to emphasize his merits to you," he wrote to Bryan. Noting that he was personally responsible for the orders which directed Canova to aid Iturbide, Cardoso de Oliveira apologized to the Secretary of State for having denied the Department of the continued services of so valuable a representative. Carothers

[20]Oliveira to State Department, December 26 (two), 1914, NA 312.12/126, 127; Carothers to State Department, January 2, 8, 1915, ibid./154, 174; State Department to Canova, January 4, 1915, ibid./157; Canova to State Department, January 4, 1915/27420; El Paso Morning Times, January 6, 1915.

was similarly saddened by Canova's recall.[21] Bryan had no intention of allowing Canova's gallantry to go unrewarded. In February, he recommended to the President that the former agent be given a clerical post in the Latin American Division of the State Department. In April, Canova was made Assistant Chief of the division; in July, the Chief.[22] In that post, which he held until 1918, he was to continue to reveal an immense capacity for intrigue.

Denied Canova's services in Mexico, Bryan sought to vindicate him, as well as Silliman. He directed Cardoso de Oliveira to secure proof of the bribery charges or a complete retraction. Palafox, a tough, swarthy little revolutionary, at first refused to do either. Instead, he demanded that Silliman also be recalled. He claimed that the agent's association with Carranza made him an enemy of the revolution. Oliveira refused to be cowed. In a memorandum addressed to Zapata and Villa, instead of

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[21] Oliveira to State Department, December 26, 1914, NA 312.12/126; Carothers to State Department, January 8, 1915, ibid./174.

[22] Bryan to Wilson, Bryan Papers, Box 43; Register of the Department of State, 1917, 93. While serving as Chief of the Division of Latin American Affairs, Canova earned the reputation in Mexico of being an interventionist. An undated memorandum in the Archivo de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores in Mexico City, which outlines his career, reveals that this was the official government impression of him. See "Información cerca de Leon J. Canova," AGRE, L-E-849, Leg. 1.

Palafox, he set forth the reasons why the United States and other foreign powers had wanted Iturbide's life spared. He included copies of Bryan's instructions on this score. As a result, Palafox made a partial retraction of the charges, claiming that they had been based on second-hand information.[23]

Bryan refused to accept the partial retraction. If there was no absolute proof, he wrote to Oliveira, then Palafox must admit the innocence of the two agents. Under pressure from other ministers in the Conventionist provisional government, Palafox made a full retraction.[24] Bryan's headstrong behavior may have vindicated Canova and Silliman, but it heightened Zapatista resentment against the United States. On Janaury 15, the day after Palafox withdrew his allegations, several members of the Zapata delegation to the Convention (which began meeting again in Mexico City on January 1) denounced President

[23]Silliman to State Department, December 24, 1914, NA 312.12/118; Oliveira to State Department, December 29, 1914, January 3, 1915, ibid./145, 156; State Department to Oliveira, December 27, 1914, ibid./127; Bryan to Wilson, December 24, 1914, Bryan Papers, Box 43; "A Resume of the Case of Eduardo N. Iturbide, respectfully submitted to the consideration of Generals Francisco Villa and Emeliano Zapata," [n.d.], AGRE, L-E-847, Leg. 10; copy in Oliveira to State Department, December 28, 1914, NA 312.12/137.

[24]State Department to Oliveira, January 4, 1915, ibid./156; Silliman to State Department, January 13, 1915, ibid./175; New York Times, January 14, 1915, p. 6. In making his retraction, Palafox sought to save face by claiming that he had been so busy at the time he signed the statement of charges that he had not been aware of the exact nature of the document.

Wilson as a meddler who lacked true sympathy for the objectives of the Mexican Revolution.[25]

This attack upon the President would have been less portentious had not the Zapatistas seemed so determined to speak for all the Conventionists. In December and January, the followers of Zapata steadfastly strove to increase their influence. It became more and more apparent, moreover, that the Villa-Zapata marriage was one of convenience rather than holy wedlock. The purge in Mexico City witnessed Zapatistas killing Villistas and vice versa. Canova reported from El Paso that a potential estrangement between Villa and Zapata was likely because the Zapatistas were determined to "hold a balance of power" in the Convention. From Mexico City, Silliman also reported that Zapata's followers were determined to dominate the proceedings.[26]

If Wilson and Bryan paid any attention to the reports of H. L. Hall, they must have been aware of this tendency long before Canova and Silliman reported it. Hall of course, had no official connection with the State Department. The Zapatistas at Aguascalientes had been curious enough to make inquiries to Canova concerning

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[25] Silliman to State Department, January 16, 1915/14223; New York Times, January 16, 1915, p. 4.

[26] Canova to State Department, December 30, 1914/14131; Silliman to State Department, December 31, 1914/14115.

Hall's status. At the direction of the Department, Canova had replied that Hall had no official status, but that he had championed the Zapatistas during his stay in Washington and through his correspondence from Cuernavaca. This statement, plus the fact that Hall gave much of his time to volunteer service at the local Cruz Blanca hospital, apparently satisfied them that he was acting in their interests.[27]

Cloistered in Cuernavaca, Hall faithfully reported the attitudes of the Zapatistas. His rambling letters revealed that they at first had little faith in the Convention; but after achieving more success than expected at Aguascalientes, including acceptance of the principles of their Plan of Ayala, they grewincreasingly determined to dominate the Convention, hence the revolution. He did not attribute these ambitions to Zapata personally, but to others, such as Díaz Soto y Gama and Palafox. The Zapatistas' greatest virtue, he implied, was their inflexibility; they did not compromise their principles. On the other hand, they thought Villa too worldly, too willing to compromise, because he consorted with holdovers of the Madero regime. Assuming that wealth inevitably corrupts, they suspected the Villistas because of the abundance of munitions and supplies they commanded. The

27Cobb (for Canova) to State Department, November 4, 1915, and State Department to Cobb (for Canova), November 5, 1914/13679.

meeting at Xochimiloc and the joint entry into Mexico City, Hall revealed, had served to confirm the Zapatistas' suspicions. The Villistas adorned themselves in gaudy uniforms and cruised about in automobiles. Their ostentation smacked of past reactionary regimes. It compromised their revolutionary virtue.[28]

For his part, Villa distrusted Zapata because he had allowed so many ex-federals to join his revolutionary army. Carothers reported Villa as saying that many of these ex-federals should be tried as criminals rather than treated as allies.[29] Nor was Villa satisfied that Zapata was prosecuting the war against Carranza vigorously enough. After capturing Puebla in December, Zapata withdrew most of his forces to Morelos. Obregón had little trouble in retaking Puebla in early January. Nothing stood between him and Mexico City. Villa was infuriated. Zapata's claim (even if it was true) that the ex-federals had deserted at a critical point in the battle, and were responsible for the defeat, hardly satisfied Villa. He was beginning to learn that Zapata's

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[28]Hall to State Department, October 21, 26, November 3, 6, 8, 9, 13, 25, December 2, 3, 1914/27424, 27436, 20609-1/2.

[29]Carothers to State Department, December 16, 1914/14061; Womack, Zapata, 222-23; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 154.

first concern was always the protection of Morelos.[30]

Gutiérrez was disenchanted with both Villa and Zapata. In addition to their factional disputes, the Villistas and Zapatistas subjected the provisional president to constant harrassment. After failing a second time to establish an accord with Obregón to eliminate Carranza, Villa, and Zapata, Gutiérrez gathered some of his loyal followers on January 15 and fled the capital with most of the funds in the Conventionist treasury. Establishing a rump government in San Luis Potosí, he was menaced by both Villa and Obregón and again forced to flee. For a time, he endeavored to re-establish his government in Nuevo León. In June he renounced any alim to political power. In Mexico City, meanwhile, Roque González Garza, presiding officer of the Convention, and a loyal Villista, was given authority to exercise executive power.[31]

The disintegration of Conventionist unity underlined the inadequacies of the State Department's system of representation in Mexico. Only through Carothers did the Administration have satisfactory communications with a factional leader. For a time, Silliman served as

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[30]Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, II, 176-77; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 166-67, 172-75.

[31]Ibid., 166-75.

Gutiérrez's confessor.[32] But the Provisional President's flight put an end to that liaison. Upon assuming executive authority, González Garza, who hoped for cordial relations with the United States, made overtures to Silliman.[33] H. L. Hall, who had accompanied the Zapatistas to Mexico City, pointed out that Silliman was unacceptable as a representative to the Convention. The Zapatistas looked upon him as little more than Carranza's spy.[34] Even Carothers complained of Silliman's inadequacy in this respect. "I do not believe he [Silliman] will do the Government any good in his position in Mexico City," Carothers complained to Bryan, "because he is a coward and absolutely biased in his opinions . . . The Government needs a man in Mexico City who is not afraid of the devil, and at the same time has sufficient tact. . . ."[35]

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[32]Silliman to State Department, January 9, 12, 13, 1915/14173, 14188, 14195. On the eve of his defection, Gutiérrez poured out his woes to Silliman and even hinted that he was negotiating with Obregón.

[33]Silliman to State Department, January 23, 1915/14271.

[34]Hall to State Department, December 10, 17, 20, 23, 27, 1914/20609-1/2.

[35]Carothers to State Department, January 8, 1915, NA 125.36582/129. When Silliman received word from a State Department source that both Canova and Carothers were criticizing him, he demanded an opportunity to refute the charges. Bryan did not even reply to Silliman's request. Silliman to State Department, January 9, 1915, NA 125.8273/144.

Hall also presented a potential problem. It may be recalled that, in response to his request for written credentials, Bryan sent a letter to Consul General Shanklin on October 22, reviewing Hall's activities in Washington and indicating that the State Department had allowed him to "unofficially" report on conditions in Cuernavaca. Hall did not receive this letter until he arrived in Mexico City in early December. Although it was not the letter of credentials he had hoped for, Hall accepted it as such and went about passing himself off as a special agent of the State Department.[36] For their part, the Zapatistas either accepted the letter as sufficient credentials or, more likely, recognized his true status and sought merely to use him as a funnel through which to pass propaganda to Washington.

The legitimate agents resented Hall's activities. Silliman and Canova thought that he might have influenced Palafox against them. Before departing Mexico City, Canova urged Cardoso de Oliveira to secure a note from Washington which would clarify Hall's status. Carothers felt that the Zapatistas should be informed of Hall's status in order to prevent a possibly serious misunderstanding that would produce strained relations between

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[36] El Sol, December 14, 1914.

them and the United States.[37] Bryan did direct Chief Clerk Ben Davis, to whom Hall addressed all his correspondence, to again inform the misguided Morman that he was not an official representative of the State Department and that he should cease representing himself as one. The letter, addressed on January 19, did not arrive until after Hall left Mexico City when the Zapatistas evacuated in late January.[38]

Hall returned to his volunteer work with the Cruz Blanca hospital in Cuernavaca. He also revivied and expanded his plan to establish an agricultural colony in Morelos. His lengthy reports of conditions in Zapata's stronghold continued to flow into Washington. In describing the tumultuous sessions of the Convention, which met in Cuernavaca from early-February to mid-April, he invariably depicted Zapata's delegates as disinterested patriots. Villa's delegates, on the other hand, were pictured as obstructionist remnants of the Madero regime. If the Zapatistas sought to use Hall for propaganda purposes, they did not err in their choice of organs.[39]

[37]Silliman to State Department, December 24, 1914, NA 312.12/118; Canova to State Department, December 27, 1914, ibid./131; Carothers to State Department, January 8, 1915, ibid., 125.36582/129.

[38]Davis to Hall, January 19, 1915/20609-1/2. Hall did not receive this letter until he returned to Mexico City nearly three months later. See Hall to State Department, April 5, 1915/20609-1/2.

[39]Hall to State Department, February 9, 17, 18, 27, March 3, 7, 12, April 4, 7, 13, 1915/20609-1/2. Claiming

Events of late-January and early-February further revealed the need for more adequate representation in Mexico. The news of Gutiérrez's defection caused the Zapatista garrison to bolt the capital, leaving the Convention inadequately guarded. Thereupon, Villa invited the delegates to come north to his stronghold in Chihuahua. But they voted instead to move to Cuernavaca. Sensing that by doing so they might be at the mercy of the Zapatistas, many of Villa's delegates left the Convention and went to join their leader. Working manfully to insure a peaceful transfer of the city, González Garza remained behind until the eleventh hour before fleeting to Cuernavaca. On January 28, within hours after the Conventionists' departure, Obregón again occupied Mexico City in the name of the Constitutionalists.[40]

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that Manuel Palafox and the Díaz Soto y Gama brothers, Antonio and Ignacio, were subscribers to his plan, Hall proposed to establish a model agricultural community. His program called for privately owned farms, but every other economic activity—stores, warehouses, tanneries, dairies, saw mills, etc.—was to be organized into cooperatives. He planned topical surveys, soil analyses, reclamation and irrigation projects, and a variety of other improvements. He also proposed to establish an agricultural school modeled after Tuskegee Institute of Alabama. Just how much support he had for these grandiose schemes is impossible to determine.

[40]Silliman to State Department, January 27, 28 (two), 29, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 648-49; Silliman to State Department, January 28, 1915/14303; New York Times, January 28, 29, 1915, p. 1; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 178.

Shortly after Obregón occupied Mexico City, Carranza proclaimed Vera Cruz to be the capital of the Republic. Mexico City was reduced to the status of capital of the newly created state, Valle de Mexico. Insisting that all diplomatic representations be directed to his officials, Carranza invited the diplomatic corps to join him in Vera Cruz. Preferring withdrawal from Mexico to submitting to Carranza's dictates, the diplomats unanimously agreed to remain in Mexico City and await a possible turn of events.[41] With no means of effectively communicating with the Convention in Cuernavaca, on February 5, Villa declared Chihuahua the capital of his regime. He, too, created a provisional government, but promised to disband it when the Convention could effectively assume control of civil affairs in Northern Mexico.[42]

For obvious reasons, Secretary of State Bryan gave considerable thought to increasing the number of agents in Mexico. The search for new agents began early in January following Canova's recall to Washington. It intensified when Carothers temporarily threatened to resign. Offered a large retainer by several business firms to act as their counselor, Carothers wrote to Bryan that he owed

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[41] Oliveira to State Department, February 6, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 649-50.

[42] Enrique Llorente, Confidential Agent of the Provisional Government of Mexico (Convention), to State Department, February 5, 1915, ibid., 650-51; Cobb (for Carothers), February 6, 1915/14362.

it to his family to accept such a lucrative offer. At first, he agreed to continue in the service of the Department only until a replacement could be found. Bryan did not lack for candidates. He proposed several Midwesterners, all "deserving Democrats," but President Wilson apparently was not impressed with their qualifications. He would have liked to send Paul Fuller to Mexico City, but felt that the New Yorker deserved a more prestigous assignment. Wilson did suggest that Bryan consult Fuller in chosing new State Department agents, and the former presidential agent recommended two New York acquaintences.[43]

Before any new appointments were activated, conditions in Mexico changed significantly. The Conventionists evacuated Mexico City, and Carranza declared Vera Cruz the new capital of Mexico. It no longer seemed necessary to have a man in Mexico City if all diplomatic representations had to be directed to Vera Cruz. More importantly Carothers changed his mind about retirement. Bryan

[43]Bryan to Wilson, January 6, 22, 1915, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; Bryan to Wilson, January 12, 1915, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 124; Wilson to Bryan, January 14, 1915, ibid.; Bryan to Fuller, January 27, 1915, Bryan Papers, Box 30; Carothers to State Department, January 7 (two), 8, 1915, NA 125.36582/121, 129; State Department to Carothers, January 7, 1915, ibid./121; New York Times, January 10, 1915, II, p. 10. In the above correspondence, Bryan did not refer to the nominees by first name. Those he mentioned were identified as D. J. Campeau of Detroit, Connally of Iowa, Graham of Illinois, and Hughes from Missouri. The two proposed by Fuller were referred to as Smith and Fearn.

naturally urged Carothers to reconsider. "Owing to [the] limited number of persons possessing requisite qualifications, namely loyalty to the Administration, having friendship of Villa, and knowledge of the Spanish language," the Secretary explained, it would be very difficult to find an adequate replacement.[44] General Scott, meanwhile, was looking after Carothers' interests. He wrote to Bryan that Carothers was irreplaceable and that he deserved a raise in salary. Carothers' salary was, indeed, raised from $300 to $500 per month. The raise, plus Bryan's words of praise, changed Carothers' mind. Reporting that the salary increase would relieve the worry for his family's financial security, the special agent declared his willingness to continue in the service of the Department as long as he was needed. But when he asked for additional funds to hire a stenographer, his request was denied.[45]

Despite his search for additional State Department

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[44] State Department to Carothers, January 12, 1915, U.S. Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1916 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1925), 479. There is no explanation for this document appearing in the 1916 edition instead of the 1915 edition of Foreign Relations.

[45] Carothers to State Department, January 12, 30, 1915, NA 125.36582/124, 128; State Department to Carothers, January 30, February 3, 1915, ibid./125, 128; Scott to Carothers, January 26, 1915, Scott Papers, Box 17; Carothers to Bryan, February 5, 1915, Bryan Papers, Box 43.

agents, Bryan made no new appointments. The Convention and Zapata were ignored. In February, without enthusiasm he reassigned Silliman to Carranza. On January 12, Bryan had suggested to Wilson that, since Silliman had never been very effective, he should be returned to his consular duties in Saltillo. Shortly afterward, the Secretary of State received a letter from Luis Cabrera, inquiring why Silliman had not been sent to Vera Cruz to represent the United States near the First Chief. Bryan thought Cabrera's inquiry adequate justification to send the agent to Vera Cruz; but before he acted on the suggestion, Carranza made it practically necessary. On February 15, the First Chief directed his military commanders in the field not to receive representations from "confidential or consular agents of foreign governments." Obviously referring to the activities of Canova and Carothers, he declared that dealing with such agents in the past had produced "the inconvenient effect of breaking up the unity which should prevail in all the acts of the Constitutionalist Government and tends to belittle the authority of the First Chief. . . ." Regardless of their nature, all diplomatic representations should be directed to the Foreign Minister in Vera Cruz.[46]

[46]Bryan to Wilson, January 22, 1915, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; Elisio Arredondo, Confidential Agent of the Constitutionalist Government of Mexico, to State Department (conveying copy of Carranza to all military commanders of the Constitutionalist Army), February 15, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 652-53.

It was obvious that the Administration had to have someone in Vera Cruz. Consequently, the day after Carranza issued his directive, Silliman was ordered to return to the side of the First Chief. Belt, who had been on leave in the United States for almost two months, was again directed to join Silliman and act as his assistant. Regular passenger service between Vera Cruz and Mexico City disrupted by the Zapatistas, Carranza sent a special train to fetch Silliman. On February 21, Silliman received an enthusiastic welcome upon his arrival in Vera Cruz.[47]

Perhaps one reason why Bryan did not send any more State Department agents into Mexico was that Wilson had decided to send another presidential fact-finding agent. January, 1915, had witnessed rapid changes in the fortunes of the revolutionary factions. Contrary to expectations, Carranza seemed to be growing stronger. Although Washington probably did not yet recognize the fact, the First Chief had realized that his personal reform ideas were not sufficient to satisfy his generals, especially those who had attended the Convention of

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[47] State Department to Oliveira (for Silliman), February 16, 1915, NA 125.8273/157a; Silliman to State Department, February 18, 1915, ibid./155; Silliman to State Department, February 19, 1915/14425; Canada to State Department, February 21, 1915/14427; New York Times, February 19, 1915, p. 8; El Pueblo, February 21, 1915.

Aguascalientes. To solidify his support and gain more, Carranza, with Obregón's counsel, declared on December 12, 1914, and January 6, 1915, that he was amending his Plan of Guadalupe to provide for agrarian reforms, including the restoration of illegally seized peasant lands, the formation of new ejidos (communal farms), and the dissolution of large haciendas and industrial monopolies. In addition, Obregón, after occupying Mexico City, entered into negotiations with the syndicalist Casa del Obrero Mundial. In return for promises of labor legislation, the workers formed separate military units called "Red Battalions," and entered the war against Villa. As a result of Obregón's wise counsel, the promises of judicial reform, and the fact that he ended military government in local communities and allowed home rule, Carranza garnered thousands of new supporters.[48]

Obregón's defeat of the Zapatistas at Puebla and his reoccupation of Mexico City were the first signs that the Constitutionalists would not be easily toppled and that Mexico was in for its bloodiest months of civil war. From Wilson's point of view, what was more alarming about the

[48]"Adiciones al Plan de Guadalupe y Decretos Dictados Conforme a las mismas," González Ramírez, Planes Politicos y otros documentos, 158-64; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 151-52; González Ramírez, El Problema Agrario, 214-15; Edwin Liewen, Mexican Militarism, 1910-1940: The Political Rise and Fall of the Revolutionary Army (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1968), 31, 59.

internecine warfare was the fact that Carranza and Obregón seemed determined to punish the City of Mexico. Much as if it had a mind of its own and was responsible, the city was to be razed for having previously been the seat of reactionary regimes and the protector of wealthy exploiters. All usable equipment was stripped from the public buildings and sent to Vera Cruz. Public employees, including school teachers, were furloughed. The newspapers were suppressed. All Villista and Zapatista currency was declared valueless. Since they were reserved for military use only, the railroads were not allowed to bring in the necessities of life. Just securing food became the paramount concern of most of the people. Harrassed by Obregón, many merchants closed their doors in self-defense; whereupon, he declared that they alone were responsible for the shortage of necessities. The Zapatistas destroyed the waterworks and public sanitation became a grave problem; but Obregón refused to repair the damage. When the diplomatic corps pleaded for relief for the stricken city, the general replied that he could not receive their representations.[49]

[49] Oliveira to State Department, February 3, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 649; Oliveira to State Department, February 5, 1915/14353; Silliman to State Department, January 30, February 1 (two), 2, 4 (two), 5, 8, 9, 12, 13, 16, 1915/14316, 14325, 14329, 14337, 14352, 14356, 14357, 14371, 14375, 14385, 14387, 14402; Ramírez Plancarte, La Ciudad de México, 324-36.

Wilson was bewildered by the kaleidoscope of events in Mexico. As he indicated to Duval West, whom he had chosen as his new fact-finder, "the situation there has become so complicated that I feel that I have lost the threads of it."[50] In chosing West, a San Antonio attorney, the Administration was again rewarding a "deserving Democrat." But at least he had a reputation of being knowledgeable in Mexican affairs. The new agent owed his appointment to the two Texans in the Wilson Cabinet, Attorney General Thomas W. Gregory and Postmaster General Albert S. Burleson. Indeed, it was Gregory, an old friend, rather than Bryan who called the San Antonian to Washington.[51]

A slightly-built man of age fifty-four, Duval West was a product of the Southwestern frontier. His father was one of the framers of Texas's first state constitution. A professional hunter at age seventeen, young Duval killed meat for the Southern Pacific Railway survey expedition. For a time, he was a working cowboy. In 1888, as a Deputy United States Marshal, he gained a measure of fame by winning a shootout with a band of train-robbers. Seeking the quieter life of a lawyer, he

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[50]Wilson to West, February 10, 1915, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 126.

[51]Bryan to Wilson, February 3, 1915, Bryan Papers, Box 43; San Antonio Express, February 1, 1915; New York Times, February 2, 1915, p. 4.

attended Cumberland University at Lebanon, Tennessee, before settling in San Antonio to practice his profession. Appointed Assistant Federal District Attorney for the Western District of Texas by President Grover Cleveland in 1893, West again gained notoriety by prosecuting author William S. Porter, who wrote under the pseudonym O. Henry, for embezzlement. Returning to private practice after serving as Adjutant to the 1st Texas Infantry, U.S. Volunteers, during the Spanish-American War, he was one of San Antonio's most prominent citizens when called to the service of the Wilson Administration.[52]

West met with the President on February 9. Wilson's purposes were aptly expressed in the instructions he gave the special agent:

> My wish is this: To have you meet and, as far as possible assess the character and purposes of the principle men down there of the several groups and factions, in the hope that you may be able to form a definite idea not only as to their relative strength and their relative prospects of success, but also as their real purposes.
>
> Above all, I want to find out just what prospects for a settlement there are and what sort of settlement it would likely to be. If the settlement contemplated is not seriously intended for the benefit of the common people of the country, if the plans and ambitions of the leaders center upon themselves and not upon the people they are trying to represent, of course it will not be a permanent settlement but will simply lead to

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[52] Ibid.; "When Duval West Showed His Nerve," San Antonio Express Sunday Magazine, February 7, 1915, p. 17; Dallas News, May 15, 1949; Austin American, May 18, 1949; Biographical File, Eugene C. Barker Collection, University of Texas.

> further distress and disorder. I am very anxious to know just what the moral situation is, therefore, and just what it behooves us to do to check what is futile and what promises genuine reform and settled peace.[53]

These instructions indicate that the President was considering re-assuming an active role in the settlement of Mexican affairs, but he wanted fresh information to guide him.

Strangely, Wilson directed West to go first to Villa's country rather than to the South, which seemed more rent with upheaval. Although the San Antonian reputedly spoke Spanish fluently, the State Department provided him an interpreter who also served as his secretary. Carothers came to the border to meet the new agent but brought news that a meeting with Villa would have to be delayed, since the general was on an expedition in the western states organizing military campaigns. By the time West arrived in El Paso, Carothers and Cobb had arranged for the President's personal representative to confer with Villa's subordinates. Availing himself of the comforts of Carothers' private car, West journeyed first to Chihuahua, then Monterey, before heading further south to join Villa at Guadalajara. In the process, he conferred with members of Villa's cabinet, the governors of Coahuila and Nuevo León,

[53]Wilson to West, February 5, 1915, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 126; Bryan to Wilson, February 9, 1915, ibid.

several important military officers, including General Felipe Angeles, and numerous municipal officials.[54]

For the most part, West was not favorably impressed with the Villistas. Most of them, he suggested, were "hoping for benefits to themselves." In so characterizing them, he exhibited a personal aversion for the crude, uneducated revolutionaries who held most of the positions of authority under Villa. The officials he admired, General Angeles and Secretary of Foreign Relations Miguel Díaz Lombardo, were well-bred and educated. West noted that otherwise "the man with the white shirt has apparently disappeared." The very absence of educated men, he concluded, made it impossible "to secure the services of men of experience and loyalty in the formation and administration of a proper and just civil government, and to carry into effect wise and proper financial, educational, and great reforms. . . ."[55]

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[54] Ibid.; State Department to Cobb, February 13, 1915, NA 111.70W52/44b; Cobb to State Department, February 13, 19, 1915, ibid./44; West to State Department, February 19, March 2, 1915, ibid./45, 47; Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, February 15, 22, 1915/14391, 14431; Carothers to State Department, February 18, 1915/14411; San Antonio Express, February 17, March 1, 1915; El Paso Morning Times, February 18, March 1, 1915.

[55] Preliminary Report to the Honorable Secretary of State on the Conditions in Mexico by Duval West, acting under authority conferred by the President, dated February 10, 1915, requesting him to investigate same [n.d.]/14622.

West was definitely distressed because these administrators seemed imbued with the idea "that the property of the rich should be administered by the Government for the benefit of the masses of people . . . The socialist idea, without definite expression," he reported, "seems to prevail everywhere." West also complained that the law, as administered by the Villistas, was harsh and unfair. People were condemned to death without the semblance of a trial. Property was confiscated without judicial process. Although compensation was promised the former owners, even Díaz Lombardo was vague on just how this was to be accomplished.[56]

West interviewed Villa twice: once in Guadalajara, when they dined together, and again in Carothers' private car as they traveled northward toward Aguascalientes. Villa exuded optimism. He claimed that he could establish complete control of Northern Mexico within forty days. The Chihuahua strong man also insisted that he could control Zapata. When West queried him concerning his resources, Villa claimed to have a large stock-pile of necessary staples—corn and beans—and an abundance of bullion. Pressing further, the American agent asked Villa if he could command the

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[56] Ibid.

services of "men of matured judgement and experience," and Villa replied, "'Yes, I have them—and can get them.'" West noted that he doubted if Villa could make good his claim.[57]

Concerned for the sanctity of private property, West asked Villa if he would encourage foreigners to develop his country once it was pacified. The revolutionary chieftain's answer must have startled officials in Washington when they read it. He suggested that foreigners "should not, or would not, be permitted to own lands." He also indicated that he would prefer industry to be developed by Mexican capital. "I got the idea," West wrote in his report, "that he is standing upon the popular demand that 'Mexico should be for the Mexicans,' and that an open door to foreign investors means ultimate danger to the nation." West admitted, however, that Carothers strongly disagreed with this interpretation of Villa's remarks.[58]

In his impressions of Villa, West was complimentary to a point. As did virtually everyone who ever met him, the special agent was struck by Villa's robust personal magnetism. "He is much stronger in native mentality than given credit for," West wrote to Wilson. "There can be no doubt of his good hard common sense." Then he added a

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

critical note: "His views of important governmental plans and policies to be undertaken by way of civil administration must be, for the present, considered entirely amateurish and tentative."[59]

West's overall assessment of the Villista movement contained a contradiction. Making a tentative conclusion based on the briefing he received from Villa and Angeles, he indicated that they would probably win a military victory. While admitting, moreover, that perfect order prevailed everywhere he went, that in all municipalities the people seemed contented with their officials, and that the churches, schools, and markets were open and attended by great numbers of people, West still did not think the Villistas had the ability to establish a stable government and carry out reforms. Realistically, he concluded that the accomplishment of reforms would probably require the work of several generations.[60]

West planned to travel from Guadalajara to Zapata's

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[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid. Arthur S. Link suggests that West "fairly exuded praise of Pancho and his regime in northern Mexico and confidence in Villa's ultimate triumph. Although he did not say so openly, West implied that Pancho, and not the First Chief, was still the best hope for peace in Mexico." See The Struggle for Neutrality, 465. Close scrutiny of West's report does not seem to warrant such conclusions. Only in a military sense did West suggest triumph for Villa. Since he had not yet visited Carranza, he scrupulously avoided any comparison of the relative merits of the two chieftains or conclusions that would indicate that either was more capable than the other of establishing lasting peace.

country; but safe conduct could not be arranged. In view of the critical conditions in Mexico City, Wilson decided that he should go there next. Villa, however, could not guarantee safe passage into the city, so the special agent was forced to travel all the way back to the Texas border. Stopping in San Antonio to prepare a lengthy written report, he inquired of Bryan whether he should come to Washington or proceed directly to Mexico City via Vera Cruz. Since so much had transpired in southern Mexico since West started his mission, Bryan was inclined to have him come to Washington for additional briefing, but the President directed him to proceed southward immediately. On March 15, one month after his first entry, West set out again for Mexico.[61]

Silliman, meanwhile, was wrestling with the problems that caused Bryan so much concern and was being repeatedly humiliated. One of the problems was the complete degeneration of conditions in Mexico City. With business at a standstill and food extremely scarce, the populace grew panicky.[62] Convinced that the suffering

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[61] Ibid.; West to State Department, March 11, 13, 1915, NA 111.70W52/46, 48; State Department to Oliveira, March 3, 1915, ibid./52; Oliveira to State Department, March 4, 1915, ibid./3; State Department to West, March 12, 1915, ibid./6; Bryan to Wilson, and Wilson to Bryan, March 11, 1915, ibid./47b; San Antonio Express, March 15, 1915.

[62] Ramírez Plancarte, La Ciudad de Mexico, 324-36.

was induced by the city's merchants whose only reason for closing their doors was to avoid accepting Constitutionalist paper money, Obregón warned them that he would "not fire a single shot into any mob who may attempt to get what hunger has driven them to seize."[63] On March 4, he declared that all merchants who did not open their shops and receive paper money would receive "severe punishment."[64] Presumably, he meant this edict to apply even to foreigners.

Fearing chaos, certain members of the foreign colony, calling themselves the International Relief Committee, amassed a fund to purchase relief supplies. But when they appealed for access to the railroads, Obregón told them that "the Mexican people do not need gratuitous help from foreigners."[65] Silliman reported, moreover, that Carranza, who still claimed that the railroads were needed entirely for military use, denied the committee this means of transporting their supplies to the stricken city.[66]

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[63]Oliveira to State Department, March 2, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 654.

[64]Oliveira to State Department, March 4, 1915, ibid., 657.

[65]Oliveira to State Department, March 2, 1915, ibid., 654.

[66]Silliman to State Department, March 3, 1915, ibid., 654-55.

Wilson and Bryan believed that only drastic measures could forestall a catastrophe. On March 6, they approved a strongly worded note drafted by Robert Lansing, Chief Counselor of the State Department, and sent it to Carranza and Obregón. "When a factional leader preys on a starving city to compel obedience to its decrees by inciting outlawry and at the same time uses means to prevent the city from being supplied with food," it declared, "a situation is created which it is impossible for the United States to contemplate longer with patience." The two revolutionary leaders were then warned that "the Government of the United States will take such measures as are expedient to bring to account those who are personally responsible for what may occur."[67] Just how seriously Wilson meant this threat was evidenced by the fact that he directed Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels to send the battleship Georgia and the cruiser Washington to join the small naval force already at Vera Cruz.[68]

When Cardoso de Oliveira presented the message to Obregón, the general replied that he was not authorized to deal in international matters. On March 8, Silliman

[67]Bryan to Wilson, March 5, 1915/14496A; Wilson to Bryan, March 6, 1915/14504-1/2; State Department to Oliveira and Silliman, March 6, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 659-61.

[68]Link, The Struggle for Neutrality, 462.

presented the note directly to Carranza, who read it with mounting indignation. He turned to the American agent and declared that the tone was insulting. Losing his habitual reserve momentarily, he turned to his Minister of Foreign Relations, Jesús Urueta, and stormed: "Do not reply to this note, which is unworthy of any chancery representing a true democracy." Then the First Chief and his advisors protested to Silliman for being given sole responsibility for the suffering in Mexico City. Throughout the uproar, Silliman remained silent. A Constitutionalist army officer, who witnessed the scene, later reminisced that the agent's reticence probably prevented a complete break in relations, which, he wisely noted, would have later been greatly regretted by the Constitutionalists.[69]

For a time the First Chief remained immovable. Silliman worked feverishly to prevent intervention. Accompanied by Charles Douglas, Carranza's New York legal counsel, who had recently come to Vera Cruz for conferences, the special agent called on the First Chief again on March 9 and repeated his appeal for the use of the railway in relieving the hunger in Mexico City. Carranza

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[69]Oliveira to State Department, March 7, 1915, Foreign Relations, 661; Silliman to State Department, March 8, 1915, ibid; Barragán, "From the Memoirs of Don Venustiano Carranza," El Universal, March 1, 1931, translation in NA, RG 76/148.

replied that it was not possible.[70] Contrary to what he had said earlier, on March 10, the First Chief gave Silliman a written reply to Wilson's threat. Addressing himself directly to the President in amiable terms, Carranza disclaimed responsibility for the want and chaos in Mexico City. He insisted that the United States was being misinformed by "reactionaries" who were "attempting to bring about complications which may cause the failure of the ideals of the Mexican revolution."[71] Privately, Carranza was more caustic. He told Silliman confidentially that he felt a "great personal resentment against the Secretary of State." He held Bryan, alone, responsible for the note of the 6th and declared that "the Secretary personally sooner or later must respond to him for it."[72]

With conditions in Mexico City still deteriorating, Carranza realized that his denial of responsibility was not likely to satisfy President Wilson. Rather than run the risk of a confrontation with the United States, he decided to abandon the city in order to avoid the onus Wilson had imposed upon him. On March 11, Obregón evacuated his troops. But Wilson refused to let the

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[70] Silliman to State Department, March 9 (two), 1915/14540, 14541.

[71] Silliman to State Department (conveying Carranza to Wilson, March 9, 1915), March 10, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 666-68.

[72] Silliman to State Department, March 11, 1915/14547.

matter rest. He sent a personal note to Carranza through Silliman, indicating that he had used stern language in the note of the 6th so that the gravity of his warning would be clear. Claiming that he did so as a friend, Wilson, nonetheless, left the impression that the warning still stood in the event of future incidents.[73] When Silliman delivered the note, Carranza asked him to read it aloud in Spanish. Knowing how poorly Silliman spoke the language, the First Chief was no doubt trying to save some pride by humiliating Wilson's representative. The agent reported that when he had finished, the First Chief made "no comment whatever." After a few embarrassing silent moments, Silliman changed the subject.[74] A crisis had been averted.

Conditions in Mexico City improved somewhat after the reoccupation by the Zapatistas.[75] When the Convention was re-established in the city shortly thereafter, González Garza recommended that it be neutralized. Responding enthusiastically to this suggestion, Bryan directed Carothers and Silliman to make appeals in this regard to their respective charges. Villa expressed a

[73]State Department to Silliman, March 11, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 668-69.

[74]Silliman to State Department, March 12, 1915/14577.

[75]Oliveira to State Department, March 11, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 669; Oliveira to State Department, March 15, 1915/14600.

willingness to abide by a neutralization agreement, but Carranza refused to consider it.[76]

The conflict with Carranza over Mexico City had prompted Wilson to ready his weapons; a controversy over the port of Progreso on the Yucatán Peninsula almost caused him to pull the trigger. In an attempt to pacify the peninsula in late-February, Carranza closed all the ports. In the process he prevented the exportation of some 200,000 bales of sisal hemp, which threatened American manufacturers and farmers with a serious shortage of binding-twine. In Washington, it appeared that the First Chief was prompted by no other reason than to spite the United States. Under directions from Bryan, Silliman asked Carranza to allow the exportation of the badly needed hemp. The First Chief, believing that the wealthy sisal planters of the peninsula had influenced the State Department to come to their aid, refused even this partial opening of the port of Progreso.[77]

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[76] Oliveira to State Department, March 29, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 683; State Department to Silliman, March 29, 31, 1915, ibid., 683, 685; State Department to Carothers, March 29, 1915, ibid., 683; Silliman to State Department, March 30, April 5, 1915, ibid., 684-86; Silliman to State Department, April 3, 1915/14781; Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, April 6, 1915/14795.

[77] State Department to Silliman, February 24, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 821; Silliman to State Department, February 27, March 2, 1915, ibid.; Barragán, "From the Memoirs of Don Venustiano Carranza," El Universal, March 8, 1931, translation in NA, RG 76/148.

Trying to assure Carranza that the United States was not taking sides in the Yucatán conflict, Bryan directed Silliman to propose that, in order to prevent the rebels from profiting from the sisal trade, buyers in the United States would hold in trust the purchase price of the amount of sisal they exported. Luis Cabrera, the First Chief's Secretary of Treasury, told Silliman that this arrangement would be satisfactory, if the United States would also agree to import supplies to the Yucatecans through the port of Progreso. On March 10, Bryan replied that this arrangement would be most satisfactory.[78] Considering past relations with Carranza, this problem had apparently been settled with relative ease.

The settlement did not last. For one thing, Bryan received word from American sisal buyers and his consular agent at Progreso that the Yucatecans were so desperate for food that they might prevent the exportation of sisal unless they were allowed to import food. Silliman reported, moreover, that Carranza had refused to allow an American merchantman, the Morro Castle, to sail from Vera Cruz bound for Progreso. Naval authorities also reported from Vera Cruz that a Constitutionalist gunboat was

[78]State Department to Silliman, March 8, 10, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 822, 823; Silliman to State Department, March 9, 1915, ibid., 822.

on its way to bombard the port.[79] After a Cabinet meeting on March 12, in which the advisability of intervention was discussed, Wilson directed Bryan to inform Carranza that the United States did not recognize his right to blockade the port of Progreso. If he did not open the port of his own volition, American warships would be instructed to do so. As if it would give Carranza some reassurance, the Secretary of State was also to say that "we are doing this in the interest of peace and amity between the two countries and with no wish or intention to interfere with her internal affairs. . . ."[80]

With more warships already on their way to the Mexican coast because of the Mexico City incidents, conditions were ripe for armed conflict. Bryan was confident that, if the Navy was forced to intervene, there would be no bloody sequal to the Vera Cruz intervention, because the Yucatecans were anti-Carranza.[81] He might well have recalled that Lind had counseled that there would probably be no shooting at Vera Cruz. Luckily, the

[79]W. P. Young, Consular Agent, Progreso, to State Department, [n.d.], Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; State Department to Silliman, March 11, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 823; Silliman to State Department, March 11, 1915, NA 612.1123/66; State Department to Silliman, March 11, 1915/14584a.

[80]Wilson to Bryan, March 12, 1915, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence; State Department to Silliman, Foreign Relations, 1915, 824.

[81]Bryan to Wilson, March 13, 1915, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence.

Navy was not called into action. For one thing, Carranza's blockade was never very effective, and American ships began intermittently sailing with sisal cargoes. The tension was further eased because the Constitutionalist gunboat bound for Progreso ran into foul weather and was forced to return to Vera cruz. By the time Silliman worked up enough courage to confront Carranza with Wilson's new ultimatum (it took two days), the Constitutionalists had nearly succeeded in defeating the rebels in the Yucatán and had gained control of Progreso. The Constitutionalist commander in the Yucatán, General Salvador Alvarado, was also wise enough to turn his back while American ships sailed.[82]

Silliman's timidity may well have been the most important factor in easing the crisis. He did not deliver Wilson's ultimatum as instructed. Instead, he merely told the First Chief and members of the cabinet that President Wilson had again requested that the order closing the port of Progreso be revoked. The Mexican conferees seemed aware that Silliman had received extraordinary new instructions and played a cat-and-mouse game with him. Knowing well that the agent usually presented them with a copy of his instructions, they asked to see

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[82]Silliman to State Department, March 13 (two), 16, 18, 25, 1925/14585, 14586, 14607, 14623, 14693; Silliman to State Department, March 19, 1915, NA 612.1123/157.

the text of the President's request. Fearful of the possible consequences, Silliman replied that he had been instructed to make the appeal verbally. The First Chief then asked that the response of the United States would be if he refused the request. The American agent again dodged the issue, claiming that he had not been instructed in this regard. A Mexican stenographer noted that when Carranza's secretaries pressed further for an answer to this question, Silliman conferred with Belt, his assistant, then replied that he had been instructed to do no more than secure a positive or negative reply to his President's request. Apparently having known all along what his reply would be, Carranza abruptly announced that he would accede to the reopening of the port.[83]

Whether it was prudence or lack of courage that prompted him, Silliman had declined to court a crisis. In this regard he served both his country and Mexico well. In the process, he was forced to endure the bantering of

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[83]Silliman to State Department, March 15, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 824; Memorandum de un conversación con El Sr. Silliman, March 15, 1915, AGRE, L-E-861, Leg. 5. Silliman's account of the conference gives no hint of the grilling he received. He merely noted that he "was not obliged to communicate in any way the President's intentions." Carrancista General Juan Barragán later claimed that Carranza opened the port of Progreso because Wilson threatened an arms embargo against the Constitutionalists. See "From the Memoirs of Don Venustiano Carranza," El Universal, March 8, 1931, translation in NA, RG 76/148. State Department files record no such threat.

Carranza's assistants. He also received a history lecture from the First Chief, who pointed out that had Great Britain insisted upon the exportation of cotton from New Orleans during the Civil War in the United States, it would have been comparable to the current demand of the United States for the right to export sisal from Progreso.[84]

Considering the gravity of the recent strained relations between the United States and Carranza, special agent West enjoyed a remarkably cordial welcome when he arrived in Vera Cruz on March 24. Owing to illness, Carranza was unable to meet with West until five days later. Beforehand, the special agent held several conferences with the Carrancista cabinet. The First Chief was still suffering from lumbago when he met West; consequently, the conference was short. He told the San Antonian that his ministers would give him all the information he required and that he hoped it would dispell many of the misconceptions currently held in Washington. As promised, the Carrancista ministers proved amply cooperative.[85]

[84]Silliman to State Department, March 16, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 824.

[85]Silliman to State Department, March 24, 1915, NA 111.70W52/8; Silliman to State Department, March 27, 1915/14716; West (enclosing Partial Report and Impressions Received at Vera Cruz, March 24, 1915-April 5, 1915), April 5, 1915/20721; New York Times, March 30, 1915, p. 4.

West had little opportunity to assess Carranza's character but did note that the First Chief was a "hard thinker, but not a man of action." In comparing the personnel around Carranza with Villa's advisors, he suggested that "they are a much higher order. . . ." He thought most of them were actuated by pariotism and seemed surprised to find that they were "devoting much study and work toward formulating the laws and reforms referred to in the Plan of Guadalupe." Their conception of reform needs, West noted, were virtually the same as the Villistas'. Taken as a group, he believed that the Carrancistas "would probably be able to develop the ability necessary to carry on a Civil Administration."[86]

The Constitutionalists' weakness, West thought, was in military leadership. He noted that none of the civilian leaders would prophesy military victory. Apparently unaware that this was a war being fought along rail lines to control strategic points, West offered as evidence of the poor quality of military men the fact that so much of the countryside, supposedly under Constitutionalist control, was in constant turmoil. Admitting that his opinions had to be considered tentative because he had no opportunity to meet the Constitutionalists' two foremost military men, Obregón and González, West concluded

[86]West, Partial Report and Impressions Received at Vera Cruz, March 24, 1915-April 5, 1915/20721.

that "the Constitutionalist Government under its present leaders cannot establish peace in Mexico, because of the failure of its military leaders. . . ."[87]

Rather elaborate arrangements had to be made for West to travel to Mexico City. Carranza provided a special train and an escort for the agent as far as Ometusco. To avoid a possible clash with the Zapatistas, the Brazilian Minister was directed to send certain designated individuals in carefully marked automobiles to meet the train. As it turned out, the tracks were destroyed well before the rendezvous point, and West and his secretary-interpreter were left alone in a detached car. After a long delay, a representative of the Brazilian Legation arrived with horses. From there, the party rode horseback to a point from which a Zapatista train picked them up and delivered them to Mexico City. Minister Cardoso de Oliveira, meanwhile, had arranged a reception so that West could meet the diplomatic corps and officials of the Conventionist Government.[88]

In his reports, West did not give much space to the Conventionist government. Roque González Garza, President of the Convention, was described as a "well

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[87] Ibid.

[88] Silliman to State Department, April 4, 1914, NA 111.70W52/15; Oliveira to State Department, April 7, 1915, ibid./18; Biographical File, Barker Collection.

intentioned man." West also noted correctly that González Garza was a Villa adherent, but that the Convention was currently dominated by the Zapatistas. The cabinet was scarcely mentioned. He did indicate that the government maintained excellent order in Mexico City and had made every effort to protect the lives and property of foreigners.[89] He did not even mention the complete absence of cooperation and constant quarreling between the Villista and Zapatista factions of the Convention. Perhaps he did not do so because Cardoso de Oliveira had already fully informed Washington of the imminent disintegration of the Convention as an effective deliberative body. On the eve of West's arrival, Cardoso de Oliveira reported that González Garzahad intimated that he might leave the Convention and join Villa in the North.[90]

While making preparations to visit Zapata, West discovered that the chieftain of the South was distressed by the previous treatment he had received from President Wilson. He was particularly annoyed because

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[89]Report to the President, through the Honorable Secretary of State, of conditions in Mexico by Duval West, acting under authority of the President, dated February 10, 1915, this report being supplemental to Preliminary Report on the Villa Government and Preliminary Report on the Carranza Government heretofore made, May 11, 1915/ 19181.

[90]Oliveira to State Department, March 27, 29, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 682-83.

Wilson had not answered the letter that Red Cross representative Charles Jenkinson had forwarded to Washington in December, 1913. In the letter, Zapata had requested that Wilson receive a group from Morelos who would explain the nature of the revolution of the South and seek guidance from the United States. Before journeying into Morelos, West, therefore, asked the President for clarification on this score. Wishing to pave the way for his agent, Wilson alibied that he had prepared a reply, but that, owing to a clerical misunderstanding, it was never sent. West was deputed to make apologies.[91]

Escorted by General Alfredo Serratos, West journeyed to Tlaltízapan on April 16 to meet with Zapata. The train ride through the mountains covered with lush tropical foliage impressed the American agent more than any of the other scenes he had witnessed. Meeting with Zapata in the mid-afternoon heat, West first offered Wilson's apologies for not having answered the general's letter. West then asked Zapata to explain his intentions for sending the letter. With no copy to guide him, Zapata asked for a delay while he conferred with his advisors. Seeking relief from the heat, West and his party took a

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[91]West to State Department, April 10, 1915, and State Department to West, April 12, 1915/14832; draft of reply in Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 129.

short swim in a nearby river while waiting for Zapata's reply. When the conference was resumed, the rebel chieftain asked if Wilson would receive a commission of Zapatistas in Washington. West could only reply that he would make inquiries. Zapata seemed reluctant to discuss any other matters with the special representative. He left West with the impression that he trusted only his own kind to adequately explain his purposes to President Wilson.[92]

Before leaving Tlaltízapan, West dined with Zapata on canned salmon and peaches, beans, chili, tortillas, and hot beer. Afterwards, they strolled leisurely back to the train, and West departed. Despite the brevity of the meeting, West formed firm opinions. "I was agreeably disappointed in Zapata," he wrote in his report. Like most of the revolutionaries, "he believes that it is perfectly right that the property of the rich shall be taken and given to the poor." As far as his being able to influence a permanent settlement of affairs in Mexico, West wrote: "I do not think Zapata may be taken into account other than being the

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[92]West, Mexico City to Tlaltízapan, April 16, 1915/24272a. West's description of his meeting with Zapata was apparently attached to his report of May 11, cited above. President Wilson was apparently taken with the descriptions of the journey and the meeting that he detached it and later returned it to Bryan. See Wilson to Bryan, June 18, 1915/24272a.

representative of the people in the hills and mountains of his own scope of country."[93]

Upon his return to Mexico City, West dutifully inquired if the President would receive a commission of Zapatistas. Bryan was inclined to accede, but Wilson was fearful that Zapata and the other factional leaders would interpret the move as connoting diplomatic recognition. Bryan was directed to reply that since the President had not received commissions from the other factions, he must decline to receive one from Zapata. Zapata was to be informed, however, that President Wilson would welcome what ever explanatory documents the general would care to send.[94] West made a good impression on the Zapatistas. Before he left the city, they held a banquet in his honor, and even Díaz Soto y Gama offered a toast of praise to the American agent.[95] His mission completed, West had difficulty leaving Mexico City. Fighting along

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[93]West, Mexico City to Tlaltízapan, April 16, 1915/24272a.

[94]West to State Department, April 19, 1915, and State Department to West, April 22, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 688-89; Bryan to Wilson, April 20, 1915, and Wilson to Bryan, April 21, 1915, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence. The Zapatistas did send several documents including a copy of the Plan of Ayala with West. These documents are filed in the State Department's Internal Affairs of Mexico File, 812.00/15166.

[95]"El Viaje de Mr. West," La Verdad (Mexico City), May 5, 1915; New York Sun, May 10, 1915.

the rail line that brought him to the city prevented his return along the same route. Delayed for nearly ten days, he was finally taken to Puebla by automobile, where he met Belt. Escorted on to Vera Cruz, he just had time to dine with Silliman and Admiral William B. Caperton before sailing for home.[96]

While West was making his investigations in Vera Cruz, Mexico City, and Tlaltízapan, conditions elsewhere underwent a drastic change. After his meeting with West, Villa went north to direct the campaigns against Matamoros, Nuevo Laredo, and Tampico. He hoped to defeat the Constitutionalists in the North before having to return southward for the inevitable showdown with Obregón.[97] Unable to dislodge General González from the Tampico, Villa's campaigns on the border also went badly. The Carrancistas put up stiff resistance, because they were supplied from the United States. Villa complained to Carothers because of the lack of reciprocity in the demands of the State Department. He was expected to carry on his attacks without firing across the border, yet the Constitutionalists had complete access to supplies from the United States. Bryan only replied that the laws of

[96]Silliman to State Department, April 24, 27, 28, 29, 1915, NA 111.70W52/24, 28, 29, 33, 36; El Pueblo, May 1, 1915; San Antonio Express, April 28, 29, 1915.

[97]Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 177, 214.

the United States did not provide for the closing of the frontier in such conditions.[98] At any rate, Villa had not been able to complete his border campaigns before Obregón began pushing northward.

The decisive battle of this phase of the revolution was near at hand. On March 28, Carothers reported unusually heavy troop movements to the South. The next day, Villa appeared in Torreón and asked Carothers to go south with him "for a couple of days." They did not stop until they reached Irapuato. Obregón was just thirty-five miles to the east in Celaya. Villa boasted that he would "annihilate the enemy." Carothers, never doubting that he would, left the scene and went to Guadalajara to investigate the complaints of some foreigners whose property had apparently been confiscated.[99]

With the understanding that Zapata would hit Obregón's supply lines which stretched from Vera Cruz to Celaya, Villa attacked Obregón's main force on April 6 and was repulsed. Even though aid from Zapata did not materialize, the enraged Villa attacked again on the 13th. Using a well-designed machine gun cross-fire, a maze of

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[98]Carothers to State Department, March 27, 1915, and State Department to Carothers, April 10, 1915/14849.

[99]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, March 29, April 3, 5, 6, 8, 12, 1915/14731, 14778, 14787, 14795, 14784, 14836; Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, March 28, 1915, NA 812.48/2152.

trenches, and barbed-wire entanglements, Obregón cut Villa's once proud army to pieces and sent the Centaur of the North retreating all the way to Aguascalientes.[100] Carothers returned to Irapuato on the 12th, the day before Villa's second defeat. Villa was at the front. His loyal subalterns did not inform the American of the gravity of the situation. Consequently, his reports gave no hint. Silliman, on the other hand, was reporting from Vera cruz that Obregón was winning.[101] When, even after it became apparent in Washington that Villa had been defeated, Carothers' reports indicated that Villa had the upper-hand, the State Department directed him to make a more careful investigation.[102]

On April 20, Carothers suddenly appeared in El Paso. He reported that Villa had not revealed the true nature of things until three days after his defeat. The special

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[100] Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 221-25; Thord-Gray, Gringo Rebel, 462-63; Liewen, Mexican Militarism, 34; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitutionalista, II, 279-96.

[101] Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, April 12, 1915/14836; Silliman to State Department, April 7 (two), 15, 1915/14809, 14810; Tinker, "Campaigning With Villa," Southwest Review, XXX, 154. Tinker, a journalist who had accompanied Carothers to Irapuato, indicated that the Villistas withheld the fact that Villa had already been repulsed once with heavy losses.

[102] Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, April 15, 1915/14858; State Department to Cobb (for Carothers), April 19, 1915/14893.

agent claimed, moreover, that he had telegraphed the news to the border, but Cobb had never received the telegram. Carothers assumed that Villa's telegraphers destroyed the coded draft. Carothers' full-length report, written in El Paso, indicated that Villa had withheld the true extent of his defeat. Villa told Carothers that he lost only 6000 men and had escaped with his rolling stock and other equipment intact. The Constitutionalist agency in Washington claimed that he had lost 14,000 men, part of his rolling stock, and most of his artillery.[103] Regardless of the accuracy of either estimate, the defeat was decisive and marked the beginning of a disastrous decline for Villa. It also marked a change in the relationship between Villa and Carothers. No longer could the special agent trust the candor of the Mexican general.

Shortly after Celaya, Carothers reported that the pressure of defeat caused Villa to call in his forces from Jalisco and Michoacán.[104] At the same time, Obregón's success took much of the pressure off the Constitutionalist garrisons at Matamoros, Nuevo Laredo and Tampico. By the end of April, the Villista seige on the border outposts

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[103] Carothers to State Department, April 20 (two), 22, 1915/14897, 14898, 14935; Arredondo to State Department, April 16, 1915/14882.

[104] Carothers to State Deparmtent, April 22, 1915/14935.

collapsed.[105] That Villa's eclipse was recognized in Washington was evidenced when Bryan told representatives of the press that "the failure of Villa . . . to capture Celaya and defeat Obregón has about convinced Administration officials here that the man upon whom hopes had been pinned for pacification of Mexico cannot be relied upon to save the situation."[106]

Concurrent with the news of Villa's decline came Duval West's reports on his observations in southern Mexico. West arrived in Washington on May 9, in the midst of the Lusitania crisis. More than two weeks passed before the Texan was able to confer directly with the President.[107] On May 11, however, he submitted a written report to the Secretary of State. He did not rehash what he had written before or amend his earlier reports to take into account the changes that had occurred since he first entered Mexico some three months before. His most noteworthy conclusion was "that a condition of permanent peace and order and the establishment of stable government . . . cannot be brought

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[105] Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 226; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, II, 302-19.

[106] New York Times, April 20, 1915, p. 1.

[107] New York Times, May 10, 1915, p. 8; Ibid., May 25, 1915, p. 9; San Antonio Express, May 10, 11, 12, 1915.

about by any of the contending parties without the aid or assistance of the United States." If the President wanted a responsible government in Mexico, he would somehow have to aid in its creation. How could this be accomplished? West was not explicit. But he hinted, without specifying which ones should be considered, that the best way the United States could help was to recognize one faction or a combination of factions and be prepared to support that government to the hilt.[108]

On May 24, West at last conferred with President Wilson. The press reported that West spoke disparagingly of all the factions, which was likely true. He supposedly warned the President not to support any faction.[109] If he did so, then he controverted his written recommendations. After the meeting, West returned to San Antonio. He did not serve the Administration again in a diplomatic capacity. In December, 1916, however, he was appointed Federal Judge for the Western District of Texas. He served in that capacity until his retirement in 1932.[110]

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[108] West, Report to the President . . . , May 11, 1915/19181.

[109] New York Times, May 25, 1915, p. 9; ibid., May 26, 1915, p. 5; San Antonio Express, May 29, 1915.

[110] San Antonio Express, June 13, 1915; Austin American, May 18, 1949; Biographical File, Barker Collection.

In assessing the conditions in Mexico, West erred in some respects. Most glaringly, he underestimated Carranza's military strength and overestimated Villa's. He no sooner reported the Constitutionalists' lack of quality military leadership than Obregón won his smashing triumph at Celaya. West too readily assumed that the Mexican leaders, except for Zapata, who advocated confiscation of private property, did so only for pecuniary motives.

On the other hand, West's accounts were the most balanced and least biased yet received from a special agent. He was the first agent directed to call on Villa who was not absolutely smitten by the dynamic personality of the Chihuahua strong-man. He was the first to indicate that Villa lacked the ability to peacefully administer to the needs of the Mexican nation. Other than Silliman, West was the only agent who did not ultimately find Carranza thoroughly obnoxious. He seemed to sense the First Chief's inner strength. He rightfully pointed out that Zapata's ideals did not embrace a sympathy or concern for the whole nation. By not associating agrarian reform with Zapata alone, West revealed how widespread the ideas, first espoused by the revolutionaries of the South, had become.

What would Wilson do with the information West had provided? The President must have asked himself the

questions that an editorialist of the New York Times posed when West was first sent to Mexico: "Perhaps after a few weeks he [West] will be in a position to make wise suggestions, but will they be heeded? Can they be heeded?"[111] To answer these questions, Wilson would have to abandon his policy of non-intervention.

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[111]"Duval West's Mission," New York Times, February 12, 1915, p. 10.

CHAPTER XII

THE FINAL ACCOUNTING

During the first six months of 1915, Wilson faced near irresistible pressures for intervention in Mexico. His Republican opponents on Capital Hill led the cry. The habitual critics, Senators Henry Cabot Lodge and Albert B. Fall, insisted that it was the President's responsibility to restore order in Mexico. Refining their arguments somewhat, Senator William E. Borah of Idaho, normally not an interventionist, reasoned that once Wilson intervened against the dictator Huerta, he should have insured that the successor acted responsibly.[1] Even more intense was the demand for intervention voiced by the hierarchy and laymen of the Roman Catholic Church, who decried the anti-clericalism of the revolutionaries. As pressure from American Catholics mounted, Bryan felt constrained on April 22 to issue a public statement, declaring that, while the Administration took note of every reported act of anti-clericalism and lodged protests, it could not accept

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[1] Cong. Rec., 63 Cong., 3 Sess. (January 6, 13, February 22, 1915), 1016-21, 1500-1502, 4274-84.

persecution of the Church in Mexico as grounds for military intervention.[2]

As already indicated, conditions in Mexico City between January and March had driven the President to consider intervention. The re-occupation of the city by the Zapatistas in March brought temporary relief; but shortly afterward, conditions deteriorated again. In late March and thereafter, throughout April and May, hunger, looting, and violence again resulted in appeals for intervention from the foreign colony of the city. Carranza continued to aggravate matters by denying the use of his railroads to supply the city. He enraged President Wilson in May by seizing some of the supplies purchased by the International Relief Committee.[3] John W. Belt maintained in a personal letter to Bryan that this Committee harbored a group of dissidents who courted such incidents in hopes of provoking intervention. Mostly Americans, they were, he warned, in communication with business interests in the United States who also hoped for intervention.[4]

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[2]Link, Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 132; New York Times, April 22, 1915, p. 6.

[3]Oliveira to State Department, March 26, 27, May 7, 21, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 682, 689-91; Oliveira to State Department, April 3, 1915/14775; New York Times, May 29, 1915, p. 1; ibid., May 31, 1915, p. 4.

[4]Belt to Bryan, May 21, 1915, Bryan-Wilson Correspondence.

Villa was also causing the United States concern. Having modified his demands against foreign-owned mining interests, his main source of revenue for a time came from the sale of cattle at El Paso. American stockmen's associations, protesting that many of the cattle were stolen from Americans, succeeded by late April in seriously curtailing Villa's sales in the United States. Villa then opened a slaughtering plant in Juárez and, through agreements with several American packing companies, began marketing processed beef. As a result, American stockmen appealed to the Department of Agriculture to stop this beef trade. Despite pledges from Carothers and the packing companies that Villa was not processing beef stolen from Americans, the Department of Agriculture did stop shipments of Villa's beef on the grounds that his abbatoir did not meet sanitation requirements prescribed by the laws of the United States.[5] Carothers warned that Villa would be indignant over this turn of events and, in his opinion, "justly so." The special agent also indicated his fear that, as a result of the decision, Villa would not take

[5]Senator Charles A. Culberson (Dem.-Tex.) to Bryan, January 8, 1915, NA 312.114P19; Carothers to State Department, March 15, April 30, May 6, 1915, ibid./5, 6, 10. Carothers' letter of March 15 includes affidavits from American packing companies pledging that they were not trafficking in beef stolen from American ranches.

favorable action on pending matters concerning foreign property.[6]

Carothers' prophecy held true. When, in mid-May, the Yaqui Indians of Sonora began raiding foreign-owned ranches, three Americans were brutally murdered. The Secretary of State directed Carothers to urge Villa to send troops to Sonora to end the trouble. In response, Villa told the agent that as long as the Carrancistas controlled the Sonoran border and he was expected to abide by the agreement made in January, which forbade him to attack border towns, he could not guarantee the safety of foreigners in Sonora.[7]

Intrigue in the State Department also swiftened the drift toward intervention. By the spring of 1915, there were several Mexican juntas in the United States either plotting counterrevolution or trying to win the support of the Wilson Administration for plans to pacify Mexico.[8]

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[6]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, May 9, 1915, ibid./10.

[7]State Department to Carothers, May 17, 1915, NA 312.11/5980; Carothers to State Department, May 19, 21, 1915, ibid./6019, 6021.

[8]One such counterrevolutionary movement centered around Pascual Orozco and Victoriano Huerta, who came to the United States from exile in Spain. See Meyer, Pascual Orozco, 124-31; Rauch, "The Exile and Death of Victoriano Huerta," HAHR, XLII, 135-44. Federico Gamboa and other remnants of the Mexican Catholic Party, with the support of Catholic elements in the United States, tried to interest Bryan in a plan of pacification. Both Bryan and Wilson thought they smelled counterrevolution in the plot.

The movement that attracted the greatest attention of State Department officials was headed by Eduardo Iturbide. The plot was largely given shape by Iturbide's guardian angel, Leon J. Canova, who was currently the Assistant Chief of the Latin American Division. Supported by the United States, Iturbide would become a third force in Mexico which would overpower both Villa and Carranza. Besides Canova, the plan was supported by Assistant Counselor Chandler P. Anderson, Chief Counselor Robert Lansing, and the Secretary of Interior Franklin K. Lane. Bryan opposed the scheme at every turn. The upshot of the plot was a tumultuous Cabinet meeting of June 1, at which Bryan and Lane argued violently over the merits of Iturbide. Although the President did not take part in the argument, he accepted Bryan's advice that the plot smelled of reaction. The Cabinet meeting, nonetheless, convinced Wilson that he must abandon non-involvement and take a more active part in promoting a final settlement in Mexico.[9]

Wilson called it a "pig in a poke." See Bishop Charles Currier to Bryan, March 15, 1915/16810; Bryan to Wilson, March 16, 1915/ibid.; Wilson to Bryan, March 16, 1915/ ibid.; Bryan to Currier, March 19, 1915/ibid. Felix Díaz planned to foment an uprising in the State of Oaxaca. See Memorandum of a conversation with Honorable Leslie M. Shaw, July 15, 1915/23137.

[9]Link, The Struggle for Neutrality, 470-76; Teitelbaum, Wilson and the Mexican Revolution, 268-70.

How could he become involved without courting a military confrontation? West had suggested recognizing one faction or a coalition of factions and supporting that government to the hilt. But which faction or factions? Even before the climactic Cabinet meeting of June 1, David Lawrence, a young journalist friend of Wilson, suggested a means of narrowing the choices. A Princeton graduate, Class of 1910, Lawrence's associations with Wilson went back to when he was a reporter assigned to the university president's office by the undergraduate newspaper. In 1911-1912, he had covered the Madero Revolution for the Associated Press. A correspondent for the Washington bureau of the Associated Press since 1912, he was an intimate of the President and the leaders of the various Mexican juntas in the United States.[10]

Addressing a letter to the President on May 27, Lawrence warned that famine would sweep Mexico and the cries for intervention would intensify if the revolutionary factions in Mexico and the various juntas in the United States continued to work at cross purposes. He suggested that besides the great personalities of the revolution (Carranza, Villa, and Zapata), there were many leaders who would willingly enter into a compromise agreement if it would mean peace. The President should appeal directly to

[10]"David Lawrence," Current Biography, 1943 (New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1944), 428.

them, as well as to the great personalities, to resolve their differences over the conference table. A provisional government created in such a manner, Lawrence proposed, should be accorded diplomatic recognition and given moral, financial, and military backing, while those who abstained from the conference should be denied such support.[11]

Wilson liked Lawrence's suggestions. He apparently was preparing a note embodying the journalist's ideas before the Cabinet meeting of June 1.[12] Afterward, he sent the personally-drafted note to the State Department for distribution to all American consuls and special representatives in Mexico. The message bore a striking resemblance to the suggestions in Lawrence's letter of May 27. After reciting the troubles Mexico had faced for over two years and describing her current destitute condition, Wilson declared:

> It is time . . . that the Government of the United States should frankly state the policy in these extraordinary circumstances it becomes its duty to adopt. It must . . . lend its active moral support to some man or group of men, if such may be found, who can rally the suffering people of Mexico to their support in an

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[11]Lawrence to Wilson, May 27, 1915, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 130.

[12]Wilson told reporters that he was preparing to announce a policy change aimed at ending the strife in Mexico. See New York Times, May 29, 1915, p. 1.

> effort to ignore, if they cannot unite, the warring factions of the country, return to the constitution of the Republic so long in abeyance, and set up a government at Mexico City which the great powers of the world can recognize and deal with, a government with whom the program of the revolution will be a business and not merely a platform . . . I feel it to be my duty to tell them that, if they cannot accomodate their differences and unite for this great purpose within a very short time, this government will be constrained to decide what means should be employed . . . to help Mexico save herself and serve her people.[13]

Wilson had scrapped his non-involvement policy. But in once more striving to aid in the solution of Mexico's problems, he again revealed his naivete—as did his new advisor, David Lawrence. He seems to have thought that after some five years of fighting, the revolutionaries could get together around a conference table, shed their animosities, and end their revolution.

Remarkably, the first responses to the President's note were encouraging. Through the Brazilian Minister in Mexico City, Roque González Garza, President of the Convention, sent invitations to Carranza and Villa to join the Convention in an armistice and negotiations leading to the formation of a provisional government.[14]

[13] Statement by the President, sent to all American Consuls and other special representatives in Mexico, June 2, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 694-95.

[14] Oliveira to State Department (conveying González Garza to Carranza and Villa, June 3, 1915), June 4, 1915, ibid., 697-98; State Department to Silliman and Carothers, June 5, 1915, ibid., 698.

The First Chief even told Silliman that "he would disappoint any enemies of Mexico and the United States who expected defiance from him."[15] Carothers reported from Chihuahua that Villa's ministers were quite willing to cooperate. They felt certain that their chief would give a favorable reply.[16]

Villa's personal reply was held in abeyance temporarily because he was locked in battle with Obregón. The battle at León de las Aldamas, which proved crucial in more ways than one, began on June 1. This time General Felipe Angeles was with Villa and advised him to fight a defensive battle. Refusing to learn from his experience at Celaya, Villa sent another massed cavalry charge at Obregón and was again soundly defeated. Having already evacuated his troops from Monterey on May 23, Villa's defeat at León further revealed the decline of his fortunes.[17] It was under these conditions that Carothers received Villa's reply to President Wilson's newest proposal.

Although his power and territory were shrinking, Villa gave Carothers a statement on June 10, boasting

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[15]Silliman to State Department, June 7, 1915/15161.

[16]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, June 3 (two), 1915/15119, 15125.

[17]Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 260-61; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, II, 341-47.

that he still controlled the largest part of Mexico, yet would humble himself for the sake of peace and negotiate with his enemies.[18] At the same time, he sent a note through Carothers and the State Department to Carranza and González Garza, accepting the Convention president's invitation to enter into peace negotiations.[19] It was all very encouraging, to a point.

Soon it became apparent in Washington that any hope for a prompt settlement was illusory. For one thing, the lesser chiefs did not come forward and demand peace. They continued to defer to their factional leaders. The Zapatistas did not support González Garza's peace overtures in the name of the Convention. Zapata, personally, urged the Convention to ignore Wilson's demands.[20] In the Convention, Díaz Soto y Gama denounced González Garza and launched into a lengthy but apocryphal attack upon President Wilson and the United States. He even claimed that Duval West had demanded a bribe from Zapata in return for a favorable report on his faction. When Zapata refused, the raging revolutionary charged, West returned to

[18] Carothers to State Department (conveying Villa to Wilson, June 10, 1915), June 11, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 701-703.

[19] Carothers to State Department (conveying Villa to González Garza and Carranza, June 10, 1915), June 11, 1915, ibid., 703-704.

[20] Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 258.

Washington supporting Carranza, who evidently had paid the bribe. Soto y Gama warned that Wilson's newest proposal grew out of West's visit (here, he was partially correct) and that, if adhered to, would benefit Carranza. The Convention responded by forcing González Garza out of office and ignoring Wilson's plea.[21] Again, the Zapatistas revealed their disdain for anyone or any force outside their own frame of reference.

Carranza, meanwhile, did not even bother to answer González Garza's overture. After Obregón's victory at León, moreover, he felt less constrained than ever to negotiate with his enemies. Rather than admit the right of the United States to interfere in the internal affairs of Mexico, the First Chief did not even answer Wilson directly. Instead, on June 11, he issued a "Manifesto to the Mexican People," which embodied his answer. He announced the near-triumph of the Constitutionalist movement, called for his enemies to lay down their arms and submit to his authority, and promised the early establishment of a constitutional government through national elections. He promised law and order, protection to foreigners, separation of Church and state, but leniency to the clergy, and agrarian, judicial, and municipal reform. He also expressed hope that his

[21] Oliveira to State Department, June 9 (two), 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 699-700; Oliveira to State Department, June 11, 1915/15482.

government would soon be recognized by the world powers. A copy of this manifesto was sent to the State Department by Carranza's agent in Washington, but Silliman was allowed to learn of it as did the Mexican people—through the press.[22]

While Wilson awaited the answers from the revolutionary leaders, he was confronted with the immense problem of securing adequate reparation from Germany for the sinking of the Lusitania. Because of the manner in which he addressed his demands to the German Government, Secretary of State Bryan, rather than be a party to war-like threats, felt obliged to resign. To fill the vacancy, Wilson with some misgivings chose Robert Lansing. Where Wilson and Bryan were intuitive and idealistic, Lansing tended to be more practical, coldly analytical, and realistic.[23] As the President became more embroiled in the affairs of Europe, the new Secretary of State devoted much time to the solution of the Mexican puzzle. Since he feared that the Germans might use Mexico as a focal point to stir trouble for the United States in Latin

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[22]Confidential Agent of the Constitutionalist Government of Mexico to State Department, June 12, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 705-707; Silliman to State Department, June 11, 1915/15202; El Pueblo, June 12, 1915.

[23]Link, Wilson the Diplomatist, 27; Daniel M. Smith, "Robert Lansing," An Uncertain Tradition, 101-104.

America, he was anxious to find a quick solution.[24]

Carranza, seeking a quick solution of his own in June, sent General Pablo González marching on Mexico City. The prospect of another seige caused the Convention to have second thoughts about Wilson's conciliation proposal. On June 15, the Convention suggested an armistice, to be followed by a peace conference, at which the Carrancistas could be persuaded to accept some of the Convention's program of "political-social reform." González refused the proposal and kept right on marching toward Mexico City.[25]

With all peace feelers being spurned by the Carrancistas, Wilson concluded that he should make the bait more appealing. Again, it was David Lawrence who suggested a means for speeding the First Chief to a peaceful solution. After speaking to Charles Douglas, Carranza's New York attorney, Lawrence reported to Wilson on June 16 that "Carranza realizes that without the approval of the United States no government can stand in Mexico and while there will be resentment over any

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[24]Louis G. Kahle, "Robert Lansing and the Recognition of Venustiano Carranza," Hispanic American Historical Review, XXXVIII (August, 1958), 353.

[25]Oliveira to State Department, June 14, 15, 16, 17, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 708, 710-711, 712-713,

outside interference, it will be accepted and the best made of it."[26] Hoping that the prospect of recognition would move the First Chief, Wilson suggested to Lansing that he notify Carranza that the United States had not ruled out granting diplomatic recognition to his provisional regime. The First Chief should also be made to realize that the United States would be reluctant to do so unless every effort was made to conciliate the warring factions.[27]

Lansing quickly drafted the message embodying the President's suggestions and sent it to the White House for approval. Wilson was pleased with the document, but he was not sure Silliman could convey its intent with adequate forcefulness. "I fear he [Silliman] rather bores and irritates Carranza," he confided to Lansing. "I think, therefore, that we had better seek others in addition." Drawing from Lawrences's suggestions, Wilson proposed that Charles Douglas, who was again on his way to Vera Cruz, be asked to support Silliman's appeals to the First Chief.[28]

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[26]Lawrence to Wilson, June 16, 1915, Wilson Papers, Series II, Box 131.

[27]Wilson to Lansing, June 17, 1915, U.S. Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Lansing Papers, 1914-1920 (2 vols.; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1940), II, 535; hereinafter cited as Lansing Papers.

[28]Lansing to Wilson, June 17, 1915/15285-1/2; Wilson to Lansing, June 18, 1915/15286-1/2.

Silliman received the note on June 18 and presented it to the First Chief on the 21st. Oddly enough, he was not instructed to await Douglas's arrival; consequently, he conferred alone with Carranza. The headstrong First Chief referred the American agent to his manifesto of June 11, claiming that by urging his enemies to submit, he was, in fact, offering conciliation. Silliman asked if he could go beyond this declaration and invite the factional leaders to a conference. Thereupon, Carranza replied that "under no circumstances would he treat with Villa." He also showed Silliman a copy of a memorandum sent to González that was designed to forestall any compromise with the Zapatistas. He told the special agent that President Wilson was short-sighted for seeking a solution through compromise, that a government so created would fail. "The determination of the United States to adopt any other measures than the recognition and support of the Constitutionalist cause would be a regrettable injustice," the First Chief declared. "If the Government of the United States will maintain a neutral attitude, the Constitutionalist cause will subdue the opposition and win recognition."[29] Wilson was more than disappointed when he received the reply from Silliman.

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[29] State Department to Silliman, June 18, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 715; Silliman to State Department, June 22, 1915, ibid., 718-19.

Admitting the failure of his conciliation attempts, he wrote to Lansing: "I think I have never known a man more impossible to deal with on human principles than this man Carranza."[30]

Carranza's intransigence left Wilson in an embarrsssing situation; he could intervene as he had hinted that he would in his note of June 2 or he could seek another peaceful solution. Consequently, he greatfully embraced a plan proposed by Secretary Lansing. In March, when Lansing was still Chief Counselor, he had suggested that, should the United States find it necessary to intervene in Mexico, she should endeavor to do so in cooperation with the A.B.C. powers. In this way, Latin American resentment would be minimized and the action could be portrayed as a collective attempt by American nations to promote peace and stability in the Americas. At the time, Wilson had been favorably impressed with the idea. When Lansing revived it in a conversation in late June, Wilson eagerly urged him to arrange Pan-American cooperation for some kind of intervention to end the Mexican civil war.[31]

The Pan-American conference was slow in materializing.

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[30]Wilson to Lansing, July 2, 1915/15409-1/2.

[31]Lansing to Wilson, March 8, 1915, Lansing Papers, II, 529-31; Wilson to Lansing, July 2, 1915, ibid., 537; Wilson to Lansing, July 2, 1915/15409-1/2.

Relations between the United States and Carranza, in the meantime, remained strained. The First Chief's stubbornness was, no doubt, prompted primarily by his determination to preserve Mexican sovereignty, even when it might have been easier to humor President Wilson. Carranza was clearly undermatched when he dealt with John Silliman, and this encouraged him to be bold. In fairness to the American agent, it must be admitted that his orders from Washington often placed him in a compromising position. Such was the case during an incident in July. Consul Canada of Vera Cruz reported in May and June that General Cándido Aguilar, the Constitutionalist Governor of the State of Vera Cruz, was encouraging laborers to drive foreign owners from their properties. Always hostile toward the revolutionaries, Canada also indicated that depredations against Americans were particularly on the increase. Stung by the recent difficulties in dealing with Carranza, Lansing decided that stern measures were in order. On July 3, he directed Silliman to demand Aguilar's removal as Governor of Vera Cruz and that, if he was not, the refusal would be considered "an unfriendly act toward the Government of the United States."[32]

The demand for the removal of Governor Aguilar,

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[32]Canada to State Department, May 27, June 18, 1915/15352, 15344; State Department to Silliman, July 3, 1915/15344.

rather than mere appeals for him to cease his inflammatory activities, was a clear-cut challenge to Mexican sovereignty. As might be expected, Silliman shrank from the prospect of obeying his orders to the utmost. If Carranza refused, he warned Washington, it would create a grave crisis. He asked permission to withhold the note temporarily and discuss the situation with Charles Douglas, who had just arrived in Vera Cruz. Silliman held the note for a week before Lansing again directed him to present it to Carranza. This time, Douglas interceded. He cabled the Secretary of State that he was personally investigating the matter. Hinting that Canada might have exaggerated the dangers in Vera Cruz, Douglas insisted that conditions were improving and asked for the Department's patience. Lansing accpeted Douglas's counsel and informed Silliman that he need only bring the matter of depredations to Carranza's attention and urge that conditions be improved.[33] Lest Douglas become a cipher through which the Department's full intentions were habitually commuted, Lansing directed Silliman to use "great discretion" in dealing with Carranza's paid counsel.[34]

[33]Silliman to State Department, July 4, 8, 12, 1915/15364, 15395, 15420; State Department to Silliman, July 10, 1915/15395; Douglas to State Department, July 9, 1915, and State Department to Douglas, July 10, 1915/15398.

[34]State Department to Silliman, July 14, 1915/15439.

Mexico City's ordeal remained an open sore, causing conflict between the United States and Carranza. By the end of June, General González had clamped his seige on the city so tightly that virtually all communications with the outside world were cut off. Again, shortages of the necessities of life threatened mass privation. Making matters worse, Díaz Soto y Gama led the Convention, which was in its last dying throws, in creating a Comité de Salud Pública (Committee of Public Safety). Reminiscent of its French counterpart, the committee was to ferret out and eliminate all enemies of the revolution. By implication, foreigners might be included in the proscription. Considering past responses to similar situations, officials in Washington were remarkably silent during this ordeal. Their patience was rewarded on July 9, when the few remaining Conventionists evacuated the city without carrying out their threats. The next day González and his troops took their place. The Carrancista general proclaimed an amnesty and promised that the railroads would give priority to supply trains. On July 13, Silliman reported that food was on its way from Vera Cruz.[35]

Official opinion in Washington hardened, however, when,

[35]Oliveira to State Department, June 22, 25, 29, 1915/15336, 15337, 15412; Oliveira to State Department, July 4, 11, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 721, 723-24; Silliman to State Department, June 27, 28, July 10, 11, 13, 1915/15318, 15322, 15403, 15406, 15427; Silliman to State Department, [n.d.]/15404.

at the first Zapatista counterattack, González again evacuated Mexico City on July 17. Without effective city government, and at the mercy of roving bands of Zapatistas, the people of the city suffered, perhaps, their severest two week period of the revolution.[36] Ignoring the fact that most of the outrages were committed by Zapata's troops, Lansing addressed a stern note to Carranza. He, in effect, demanded that the Constitutionalists become more militarily effective. The Secretary directed Silliman to insist that the Constitutionalists re-occupy the city, this time permanently, and keep open the lines of communication. Carranza and his ministers disdained to even reply to this latest threat from the United States.[37]

Tensions again eased when González reinvested the city on August 2 and reopened communications with Vera Cruz.[38] Mexico City's ordeal was over. The Constitutionalists were there to stay, although Carranza was not sure enough of that fact to make it his capital. Minister

[36]Oliveira to State Department, July 18, 19, 22, 25, 29 (two), 30, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 726-32; Silliman to State Department, July 21, 1915, ibid., 727; Silliman to State Department, July 28, 1915/15568; Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 276.

[37]State Department to Silliman, July 29, 1915/15572; Silliman to Department, July 30, 1915/15591.

[38]Oliveira to State Department, August 3, 4, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 732-33; Silliman to State Department, August 7, 1915/15686.

Cardoso de Oliveira caused a temporary stir when he announced, on August 9, that he was taking a well-earned leave from the beleaguered city. He reported to Washington that most foreigners thought that President Wilson's policy had caused most of their woes. Since he had represented the interests of the United States for so long, Cardoso de Oliveira felt that they held him partially responsible. Charles B. Parker, an embassy clerk who had been serving Cardoso de Oliveira at the Brazilian Legation, was left to report on conditions in Mexico City.[39] Still ineffective despite the eased tensions, Silliman reported that his representations were systematically ignored. The Foreign Minister told the American agent that the tone of the State Department's notes were insulting; hence, the First Chief had refrained from answering them and would continue to do so.[40]

Carothers was also having his troubles in the North. Villa misled the agent before and during the battle of León. Claiming victory when the battle was only in its early stages, Villa sent word to Carothers, who passed

[39]Oliveira to State Department, July 29, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 731-32; Silliman to State Department, August 9, 1915/15713; Silliman to State Department, August 11, 1915, NA 701.3212/32; New York Times, August 11, 1915, p. 1. Oliveira came to Washington to confer with Lansing and Wilson before returning to Brazil. See ibid., August 21, 1915, p. 9; ibid., August 24, 1915, p. 6.

[40]Silliman to State Department, August 9, 10, 12, 1915/15713, 15731, 15749.

the information on to Washington. When, after his defeat at León, Villa prophesied victory in his next battle and Carothers so reported to Washington, the special agent drew an admonishment from the Secretary of State. Lansing directed Carothers to report only the final outcome of military engagements. The Department was not interested in Villa's prophesies.[41]

Cobb and Carothers began to disagree on conditions in northern Mexico. Beginning in May, Cobb sometimes added notes to Carothers' despatches, claiming that Villa was misleading the special agent. While Carothers continued to be optimistic in early June, Cobb reported that Villa's military strength was steadily deteriorating.[42] Slowly Carothers overcame his feelings of loyalty and admiration for Villa and saw things as they really were. His change of heart probably began when General Angeles, who was on his way to visit his family in Boston, spoke to Carothers in El Paso. It was rumored that the general and Villa had quarreled following their defeat at León. Angeles expressed doubts about Villa's future and asked Carothers

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[41] Carothers to State Department, May 23, 26, 1915/15063, 15080; Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, May 31, June 2, 9, 1915/15098, 15112, 15176; State Department to Carothers, June 10, 1915/15176.

[42] Cobb to State Department, May 31, June 7, 1915/15098, 15155; Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, May 31, June 2, 3, 1915/15098, 15115 (two).

to secure an interview for him with President Wilson, so that he might propose a plan to eliminate "certain elements" from both factions in order that the rest could come to some agreement.[43]

After the interview with Angeles, the American agent's expectations for Villa's ultimate victory disappeared from his despatches. He began to report that conditions in the area under Villa's control were deplorable. The soldiers were taking everything, leaving large segments of the population destitute. For a time, his attitude toward Villa personally did not change. He claimed that Villa was conscientious in his desire for peace. Carothers also insisted that the Department of Agriculture's refusal to allow Villa to export beef to the United States was partially responsible for the increased confiscations within the general's territory.[44]

During Wilson's attempt to conciliate the revolutionary factions, Carothers remained in El Paso in order to facilitate communications with Washington. Upon returning to Villa's side in mid-July, the metamorphosis of his opinions accelerated. Conditions were even worse than he suspected. "I see conditions very critical in all northern Mexico," he reported upon his return to the

[43] Carothers to State Department, June 18, 20, 1915/ 15263, 15269.

[44] Carothers to State Department, June 21, July 6, 1915, NA 312.114P19/18, 812.48/258.

border. "While I do not see immediate signs of complete collapse, I cannot see how existing conditions can last much longer without it." Fearful that Villa would no longer confide in him if he knew what was being reported to Washington, Carothers urged the Secretary of State to withhold any public mention of his reports.[45]

A note of apprehension now crept into the special agent's notes. He reported that "Villa is becoming harder to deal with. He is sorely pressed for money."[46] He received information that Villa had executed a Mexican rancher who refused to pay a forced loan. Such incidents were likely to increase, he warned, and foreigners would probably be involved. Appeals for Villa to desist were liable to antagonize him to the point that life for foreigners in his bailiwick would become intolerable. Carothers hoped that his appeals, combined with those of Díaz Lombardo and Angeles who would soon return to Mexico, would be able to minimize the danger.[47]

On July 26, Carothers reported that Villa had demanded a forced loan of $300,000 in gold from the mine operators of Chihuahua. Since the operators refused to

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[45]Carothers to State Department, July 19, 1915/15490.

[46]Carothers to State Department, July 22, 1915/15518.

[47]Ibid.; Carothers to State Department, July 23, 1915/15530.

pay, Carothers feared that Villa would envoke his confiscatory mining decree of March 19. When the special agent, joined by Díaz Lombardo and other of Villa's advisors, met with Villa in Torreón and asked for modification of his demands against the miners, Villa answered with more threats of confiscation. Journeying to Chihuahua, on July 31, he called a meeting of all the city's merchants. He charged that they were responsible for the shortages and resulting privation. They were demanding extortionate prices. Foreign merchants, he stormed, were the most felacious offenders. As a result of their treachery, he told them that he had decided to confiscate their stocks. He promised Carothers that foreign merchants would be compensated at the rate of cost plus fifteen per cent. At first he ordered all merchants expelled from Chihuahua but later modified his decree to allow foreigners to stay.[48]

Prospectively more ominous, Carothers reported on August 2 that Villa had called a general meeting of mine operators at Chihuahua for August 9, supposedly to discuss regulation of the industry. At this announcement, the special agent hastened to the border where he could

[48]Carothers to State Department, July 26, 1915, NA 812.63/143; Carothers to State Department, July 26, 29, August 1, 5, 1915/15540, 15582, 15606; Cobb to State Department, July 28, 1915/15570; Letcher to State Department, August 1 (two), 1915/15607, 15610.

report more freely. He despondently wired the Secretary of State that "Villa's ministers and diplomatic agents have been practically set aside in name and Villa is handling all matters himself according to his ideas." Carothers further noted that the rebel general was dead broke and would seize "everything in sight in order to raise money . . . Unless he is curbed, I feel that he will stop at nothing. . . ."[49]

Villa still professed his friendship for Carothers. In a quiet conversation in Carothers' car just before the agent departed for the border, the Mexican general put his hand on Carothers' knee and said: "I believe you and I will be friends until death, I feel that way towards you and believe you feel the same towards me." Afterwards, Villa's ministers came to the agent, one by one, and told him that he had more influence over Villa than did any other man. They urged him not to give up his attempts to hold their chief in check.[50] Carothers was equally despondent. In a telegram to Lansing, he lamented that "Villa is now dedicating to extortion the cupidity he formerly used for military purposes. . . ."[51]

Still not willing to abandon his friend, Carothers

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[49]Cobb (for Carothers) to State Department, August 2, 1915, NA 812.63/146; Carothers to State Department, August 3, 1915/15626.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Carothers to State Department, August 5, 1915/15658.

once again turned to General Hugh Scott for aid. In the past, because of his great admiration for the American general, Villa had accepted his direction. Shortly after Carothers made the appeal, Villa came to Juárez to confer with his commercial agents. On August 6, the Department directed the special agent to endeavor to hold Villa on the border, because General Scott was on his way. So that they might have some bargaining point, Carothers then requested that the Secretary of Agriculture give him and Scott authority to discuss conditions under which Villa's Juárez slaughterhouse might be reopened. With a legitimate source of revenue at his disposal, the agent reasoned, Villa might be more inclined to reverse his recent confiscatory decrees.[52]

In Washington, Secretary Lansing was concerned that Villa's power might completely collapse before the Pan-American nations could apply pressure on Carranza. With no effective force to counterbalance the First Chief, they would not likely secure any concessions. He, therefore, asked President Wilson to direct Secretary of Agriculture Houston to allow Villa to resume his meat-packing operation out of Juárez. At first the President was puzzled, unable to understand why Lansing would want to bolster Villa and prolong the conflict in Mexico. When

[52]Carothers to State Department, August 3, 5, 1915/15627, 15630; State Department to Carothers, August 6, 1915/15757a.

the Secretary explained his purposes, Wilson agreed that Villa should be allowed to export beef. As a result, Lansing conferred with Houston, made arrangements, and notified Carothers that, if Villa's abbatoir could meet inspection requirements, it could resume operations.[53]

When Carothers and Scott met with Villa on August 10, they had a concession to offer. The two American negotiators were encouraged after the first meeting. They reported that Villa had agreed not only to call off the proposed meeting of miners in Chihuahua but to return all goods confiscated from the merchants of that city.[54] Two days later, a committee of mine operators from Chihuahua joined the conferences. Carothers and Scott convinced Villa that his demand for forced loans from the miners was impracticable. He needed their coal to fuel his railroad. He should strive to cooperate with the miners. As a practical matter, therefore, Villa agreed to allow the miners to use his railroads to import whatever equipment they needed to put their mines in operation and also promised military protection. The miners, for their part, pledged 1000 tons of coal to assist in the operation of the railroad. After the conference was over, Carothers reported that Villa balked

[53]Lansing to Wilson, August 6, 7, 1915, Lansing Papers, II, 545-47; Wilson to Lansing, August 7, 1915, ibid., 546; State Department to Carothers, August 9, 1915, NA 312.114P19/29a.

[54]Carothers to State Department, August 10, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 934; Scott to State Department,

at the settlement of several other matters. He and Scott had agreed that they should not press their luck and make more demands.[55]

Carothers and Scott had secured more than they had reason to hope for. The miners were quite pleased with the arrangements. Writing in behalf of the Mine and Smelter Operators Association, A. J. McQuatters praised the two American negotiators. He especially singled out Carothers, noting that there were few Anglo-Americans who could confront the Mexicans day in and day out with demands and still maintain cordial relations with them.[56] Ever Carothers' champion, Scott added his own words of commendation: "No one but Carothers could accomplish what he has."[57] Certainly Carothers had not erred in calling for the aid of General Scott. Villa's awe of Scott is inexplicable. He was not similarly impressed with other

August 10, 1915, ibid., 935; El Paso Morning Times, August 11, 1915.

[55]Carothers to State Department, August 12, 1915/15739; incomplete version of this document in Foreign Relations, 1915, 935; El Paso Morning Times, August 13, 1915.

[56]McQuatters to Lansing, August 13, 1915/15815.

[57]Scott to Lansing, August 14, 1915/no document number. Scott also requested that Carothers be given stenographic help. In a pencil note attached to Scott's telegram, Canova indicated to the Secretary of State that Carothers did not need a stenographer, since most of his correspondence was by telegraph. Canova further suggested that Carothers probably wanted a stenographer merely to enhance his image. See Scott to Lansing, August 14, 1915, NA 111.70C22/11.

American soldiers. Again Carothers had taken advantage of that special chemistry, and the results were not disappointing.

Neither Scott nor Carothers were euphoric about their accomplishments. They realized that they had only bought some time. In order to extend that time as long as possible, Scott remained on the border temporarily to continue aiding Carothers.[58] Even with the reopening of his slaughterhouse, Villa's strength continued to wane. Carothers urged, therefore, that Washington make every effort to promote some peaceful accomodation between the factions. He warned the Secretary of State that if Villa met with more defeats and his faction degenerated into small bands, their confiscatory measures would increase.[59] Villa saw the handwriting on the wall. While conferring with Scott, he made a last-ditch attempt to end the civil war before he was defeated. He authorized the general to negotiate an armistice with the Carrancistas, in order that a conciliation conference could be held. Through the American Consul in Monterey, the State Department attempted to arrange a meeting between Scott and Obregón, but the Carrancista general refused to negotiate under the aegis of

[58]Carothers to State Department, August 24, 27, 1915/ 15900, 15942. Scott remained in El Paso until August 27.

[59]Carothers to State Department, August 13, 1915/ 15756.

the United States.[60]

In Washington, Lansing was still planning the Administration's next attempt to bring the Mexican civil war to a peaceful conclusion. While he arranged the conference of diplomatic representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uraguay, Bolivia, and Guatemala to the United States, others in the State Department were communicating with the leaders of the various Mexican juntas in the United States, all of whom claimed that they could pacify their homeland. Canova intensified his support of Iturbide. Even the President showed considerable interest in General Felipe Angeles, who appeared briefly in Washington in July. Angeles could legitimately don the mantle of the revolution. Aware that Paul Fuller had previously reported very favorably on Angeles, Wilson urged Lansing to bring the ex-special agent into consultation in preparing for the Pan-American conference. In constant communication with Carrancista agents, ex-agent John Lind also got into the act. He suggested immediate recognition of Carranza. When the Pan-American diplomats assembled on August 5, Lansing, Fuller, Canova, and others in the State Department were prepared to present an array of candidates to head a provisional

[60] Carothers to State Department, August 10, 1915/15717; State Department to Hanna, August 13, 1915/ibid.; Bonnet to State Department, August 20, 1915/15864.

government in Mexico.[61]

Lansing and Fuller met with the six Latin American diplomats in the Secretary's office on August 5 and 6. Suave and persuasive, Lansing appealed for their aid in ending the strife in Mexico. Their task, as he saw it, was to promote the establishment of a regime that would leave the revolutionaries in power. Otherwise, the peace would not last. The Latin American conferees agreed. They concluded, also, that all the current factional leaders should be eliminated. They then decided upon a two-step plan of action that was wholly in keeping with Lansing's line of thought. First, they would send a communication to all the factions, inviting them to a peace conference. A provisional government growing out of this conference would be recognized. Second, they chose a committee of three, including Fuller, to work out an arrangement for selecting a government they could recognize, even if the first step failed.[62]

By the time President Wilson received Lansing's report of the Pan-American conference, his thinking had

[61]Lind to Lansing, July 23, 1915/17050; Lind to Wilson, August 2, 1915, Wilson Papers, Series IV, Box 125; Link, The Struggle For Neutrality, 481-87; Teitelbaum, Wilson and the Mexican Revolution, 270-76. Lind began appealing for the recognition of Carranza several months earlier. See Lind to Bryan, April 21, 1915, ibid., Box 129.

[62]Lansing to Wilson, August 6, 1915, Lansing Papers, II, 543-45.

undergone a metamorphosis. He wrote to Lansing that the conferees should not expect immediate elections but should be prepared to accpet a provisional government that would inaugurate reforms by decree. Apparently impressed with Carranza's growing strength, he also notified Lansing that he and the Latin American diplomats should not rule out Carranza as a possible head of that provisional regime. To do so, he warned, "would be to ignore some very big facts."[63] As the foremost of Wilson biographers has suggested, Woodrow Wilson had finally accepted the Mexican Revolution on Venustiano Carranza's terms.[64]

Conferring again with the Latin American diplomats in New York on August 11, Lansing launched into a discourse that embodied Wilson's ideas. The conferees, including Fuller, at first balked, but finally agreed to go ahead with the first step of their plan and invite the revolutionaries to a conference. Discussion of the second step was postponed until they received the answers to their

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[63] Wilson to Lansing, July 8, 10, 1915, ibid., 547, 549.

[64] Link, The Struggle For Neutrality, 491. Arthur S. Link suggests that Wilson's response to the Latin American diplomats' proposals initiated the trend which resulted in the recognition of Carranza. Louis G. Kahle speculates that Lansing anticipated the recognition of Carranza from the beginning of the conferences and used tactics designed to make the Latin American diplomats believe that they had come to the decision of their own volition. See "Robert Lansing and the Recognition of Venustiano Carranza," HAHR, XXXVIII, 361-64.

invitation.[65] On August 13, Lansing and the six Latin American diplomats made the following appeal to all the civil and military leaders of Mexico:

> We, the undersigned, believe that if the men directing the armed movements in Mexico—whether political or military chiefs—should agree to meet, either in person or by delegates, far from the sound of cannon, and with no other inspiration save the thought of their afflicted land, there to exchange ideas and to determine the fate of and unyielding agreement requisite to the creation of a provisional government. . . ."

The diplomats offered to serve as mediators and to arrange a neutral site within Mexico's borders. They indicated that they expected an answer within a reasonable time, hopefully in ten days.[66]

Since the notes were dispersed so widely throughout Mexico, Carothers and Silliman played only a minor role in securing answers. Carothers did no more than deliver the note to Villista authorities in Juárez, who passed it on to Villa. Carothers did report on the 16th that "the joint note has caused a very favorable impression, both in El Paso and northern Mexico. The soldiers, as well as the people, are tired of war and want peace."[67] Villa's

[65]"Continuation of the Conference on Mexican Affairs," August 11, 1915/15754-1/2.

[66]A Communication, made severally and independently, to all prominent civil and military authorities in Mexico, from the Secretary of State and the diplomatic representatives at Washington of Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Uraguay, and Guatemala, August 11 (sent August 13), 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 735-36.

[67]Carothers to State Department, August 15, 16, 1915/15763, 15800.

personal reply was sent to the Pan-American conferees through his agent in Washington. As might be expected, Villa responded favorably. Still referring to himself as a Conventionist, Zapata also agreed to the conference. At the same time, virtually all the leading Villistas and Zapatistas accepted the invitation.[68]

Carranza responded in typical fashion. He began by denouncing the Pan-American conferees even before he received their message. He made it clear that he would no sooner endure interference from other Latin American nations than he would from the United States.[69] Waiting one day past the requested ten-day deadline, on August 24, the First Chief, implying that the Latin American diplomats had been pressured into agreeing to the note, sent word to Silliman that he would not reply until he received some guarantee that they acted in an official capacity in affixing their signatures. By September 3, all six diplomats had sent official statements through Silliman that they had, indeed, acted in an official capacity, and with full knowledge of their governments.[70]

[68]Llorente to State Department (conveying Villa's reply), August 19, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 737-38; Parker to State Department (conveying Zapata's reply), August 29, 1915, ibid., 739-40; List of replies to Pan-American diplomat's message of August 11, 1915, ibid., 753-54.

[69]Arredondo to State Department, August 10, 1915, ibid., 734-35.

[70]Silliman to State Department, August 24, 26, 1915/15898, 15935; Lansing to Pan American diplomats, September 1, 1915/16251a; State Department to Silliman, September 3, 1915/15898.

Still Carranza procrastinated.

It soon became apparent (as it usually did) that the First Chief's obstinacy was prompted by more important reasons than merely that of antagonizing the United States. His forces having taken Aguascalientes, Zacatecas, and San Luis Potosí in July, Carranza sent Obregón attacking further northward in late August. By September 10, Saltillo, Durango, and Villa's greatest prize, Torreón, had fallen to the Constitutionalist armies. Once again, Villa's hegemony was restricted to the State of Chihuahua.[71] What the First Chief planned was to present the Pan-American diplomats with the fait accompli of his supremacy.

Wilson and Lansing, meanwhile, were secretly working to prevent the Pan-American effort from becoming an embarrassing failure. They arranged for David Lawrence, who was currently on vacation, to join with the Chilean Ambassador, Eduardo Suárez Mujica, in conferring with Elisio Arredondo, Carranza's agent in Washington. Meeting with Arredondo at Ashbury Park, New Jersey, on August 15, Lawrence and Suárez Mujica revealed that the Pan-American nations had not ruled out the possibility of recognizing Carranza, but that they were not likely to do so unless his provisional government grew out of the proposed peace

[71] Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 275-76, 287; Barragán Rodríguez, Historia . . . Constitucionalista, II, 393-96, 466-69.

conference. The Constitutionalist agent suggested that Carranza might be inclined to accept their invitation if they first "cleared the air" and indicated what conditions would have to be met at the peace conference. Hinting that such a conference would reach conclusions not unfavorable to the First Chief, Lawrence told Arredondo that, for now, all the conferees wanted was for Carranza to accept the peace conference "in principle." The American journalist left Ashbury Park with the impression that Arredondo would urge the First Chief to accept this proposition.[72]

The events that followed the Ashbury Park meeting were shrouded in secrecy. Encouraged by Arredondo's response, Lansing and Wilson decided to make a secret unilateral appeal directly to the First Chief. At their suggestion, Lawrence contrived to have the Associated Press send him to Vera Cruz to interview Carranza concerning the Pan-American proposal. As far as the public or the Latin American diplomats knew, he was just another journalist. Once in Vera Cruz, Lawrence reported directly to Lansing under the code name "Laguirre."[73] Wilson's and

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[72]Lawrence to Lansing, August 15, 1915/15866-1/2.

[73]Lansing to Lawrence, August 17, 1915/15867-1/2; Canada (for Laguirre) to State Department, CONFIDENTIAL, For the Secretary only, August 29, 1915/16014-1/2; Lawrence to Wilson, September 11, 1915/16189-1/2; David Lawrence, The True Story of Woodrow Wilson (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1924), 104-105. The nature of Lawrence's sojourn must be pieced together from fragments.

Lansing's bent for secrecy in this case indicates that they had about made up their minds to recognize Carranza, but that they preferred to do it as painlessly as possible and without making it appear that they were imposing their will upon the Latin American diplomats.

Only twenty-six years old, Lawrence substituted brass for experience in his conversations with the First Chief. Meeting Carranza for the first time on August 29, Lawrence presented himself as having no official character. This way, he revealed, he could be of service to both sides. He explained that the United States preferred to recognize a provisional government which grew out of a peace conference, because granting recognition to only one faction would leave the others resentful and only encourage continued fighting. Carranza replied that within three weeks he would completely dominate the country. The remaining rebels would be so few and weak that their resentment would cause no dire consequences. He rejected

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Lansing, in the above cited letter to Lawrence, did not specifically mention a secret mission, but he did include the following: "I do not wish to interrupt your vacation, but I do think that you might be of very great service if you are here Thursday or Friday, as you suggest." In his own reminiscences, Lawrence states that he went to Vera Cruz as the joint representative of the President and the Associated Press, but mentions nothing about secrecy. Without mentioning Lawrence's real name, Canada reported that "Laguirre" had information for the Secretary. In his letter to the President, dated September 11, Lawrence referred to his "conversations at Vera Cruz."

the idea of accepting a peace conference "in principle," whether it ever met or not, because it would imply acceptance of foreign involvement in Mexico's internal affairs. Lawrence then suggested that the First Chief himself initiate a peace conference. After the meeting, the American journalist reported to Lansing that Carranza seemed impressed by this suggestion but would not state specifically if he would act upon it.[74]

Perhaps revealing Wilson's ultimate intentions, Lawrence outlined for the First Chief a method by which he could probably obtain recognition. He suggested that Carranza reply to the Latin American conferees in terms that would give no offense and that he should agree to some form of peace conference, self-initiated or otherwise. If no satisfactory agreement came from that conference, the most powerful faction would likely be recognized, provided it gave promise of living up to international obligations. This proposal definitely interested Carranza. Like a tiger stalking its prey, he replied that if Lawrence was invested with official character, and offered such a proposition, he would be willing to phrase his reply to the Latin American diplomats as Lawrence has suggested. Retreating, the American said that this was not possible, because his government was

[74]Canada (for Laguirre) to State Department, CONFIDENTIAL, For the Secretary only, August 29, 1915/ 16014-1/2.

acting in conjunction with other governments and President Wilson could not alone decide the issue. The First Chief was still interested. Wanting at least semi-official assurance, he urged that Silliman be instructed from Washington to say that Lawrence "spoke in the name of the Secretary of State."[75]

When Wilson read Lawrence's despatch, he wrote to Lansing: "It does not seem to me that our friend has got anywhere in particular in his representations to the stiff-necked First Chief or made any impressions on him that is likely, if confirmed, to lead to cooperation on his part with the United States. . . ." Wary of giving Carranza the impression that the United States would make a uniliateral agreement with him, the President instructed the Secretary to "send word to Silliman that our friend does come fresh from conversations with you and is in a position to know what the real sentiments and purposes of the Government of the United States are. Any official recognition of him would be a mistake. . . ." On August 31, Lansing sent the substance of the President's suggestion to Silliman.[76]

In Vera Cruz, Lawrence was making some investigations of his own. Drawing information from what he called

[75] Ibid.

[76] Wilson to Lansing, August 31, 1915/16015-1/2; State Department to Silliman, August 31, 1915/ibid.

"authoritiative and well-informed persons," he reported what was already well-known in Washington—that the Administration's representation in Vera Cruz was ineffective. "Our influence is virtually zero," he indignantly informed the Secretary of State. "We do not even get our protests and messages before Carranza." The First Chief, he added, took advantage of Silliman's friendship, while Consul Canada was absolutely ignored because he was considered an enemy of the revolution. He proposed that a new representative, one who would be more firm in his relations with Carranza, be sent to Vera Cruz. This new representative should again recommend a peace conference; but if Carranza refused to confer, the United States should recognize him anyway.[77]

Wilson would have none of Lawrence's suggestions. "I do not think any part of this good advice," he wrote to the Secretary of State. "The usual thing has happened: a man is sent down to explain our exact position and purpose and within a day or two sends a comprehensive plan of his own. . . I think it best to make no reply at all to this. . . ."[78] Lansing was similarly dissatisfied. Having committed himself to Pan-American cooperation, he could no accept the journalist's advice regarding

[77]Canada (for Laguirre) to State Department, CONFIDENTIAL, For the Secretary only, August 30, 1915/16016-1/2.

[78]Wilson to Lansing, August 31, 1915/16017-1/2.

recognition. As far as the Administration's representation in Vera Cruz was concerned, he admitted that neither Silliman nor Canada alone was adequate. They had opposite points of view and were extremely biased. But if their reports were juxtaposed, he informed the President, they struck a neat balance and gave the Department a "reasonably correct idea of the situation." No one was likely to be successful in dealing with the First Chief. Lansing suggested, therefore, that neither be replaced.[79]

Lawrence met with Carranza again on September 1. The quasi-agent could not change the First Chief's attitude toward the peace conference. After the meeting, Lawrence reported that he felt certain he had convinced Carranza that Wilson and Lansing were not personally prejudiced against him and that, from then on, the First Chief would be "better disposed" toward the United States. Carranza convinced Lawrence that he was only trying to prevent the revolution from being deprived of its triumph. He also pointed out that the spirit of nationalism was so imbued in his people that, even if he did not uphold it, others would. After this second meeting, Lawrence left Vera Cruz a wiser man for having matched wits with Carranza. Wilson suggested as much to Lansing after reading the

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[79]Lansing to Wilson, August 30, 1915, National Archives, Record Group 59, Personal and Confidential Letters from Secretary of State Lansing to President Wilson, 1915-1918/875; Lansing to Wilson, August 31, 1915/16016-1/2.

journalist's last cable. "I have the feeling that our friend is finding out what we already know," the President wrote, "an yet it may be that he has been serviceable in removing some erroneous impressions from Carranza's mind."[80]

Upon his return to the United States, Lawrence again conferred with Arredondo. The Carrancista agent told the American that the First Chief had recently indicated a willingness to discuss "international questions" with "several governments" but would not come to the peace conference proposed by the Pna-American diplomats.[81] Lawrence had other inconsequential meetings with Carranza's agent in late September, but neither Lansing nor Wilson gave any indication of taking notice of his advices.[82] With these meetings, Lawrence ended a rather unsuccessful stint as the President's special agent. He remained an ardent champion of Wilson and, in 1924, published his sympathetic recollections of the great man in a book entitled The True Story of Woodrow Wilson.[83]

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[80]Canada (for Laguirre) to State Department, CONFIDENTIAL, For the Secretary only, September 1, 1915/16187-1/2; Wilson to Lansing, September 7, 1915/16188-1/2.

[81]Lawrence to Wilson, September 11, 1915/16189-1/2.

[82]Lawrence to Lansing, September 27, 29, 30, October 1, 1915/16345-1/2, 16346-1/2, 16347-1/2, 16438-1/2.

[83]Lawrence became one of the giants of American journalism. One of the first Washington correspondents to write a syndicated column, in 1933 he became president and editor of the news magazine, U.S. News. An

Not until his forces had captured Torreón did Carranza deign reply to the Pan-American note. The Administration already knew how he would respond. No one was surprised, therefore, when he notified Silliman on September 10 that he refused the mediation offer, because it would be an encroachment upon Mexican sovereignty and set a precedent for future interference. Since all his subordinates, instead of replying themselves, had deferred to Carranza, he also pointed to the impressive unity of the Constitutionalists. He revealed explicity what Arredondo had implied to Lawrence. Because the Constitutionalists were unified and virtually dominant in Mexico, Carranza suggested that the would-be mediators join him at one of the towns on the Texas-Mexico border to discuss diplomatic recognition of his regime.[84]

Wilson and Lansing were not distressed by the reply. In conveying the text of the message to the President, Lansing noted: "The position taken by Carranza is not

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influential critic of the Roosevelt and Truman Administrations, he was founder and editor of World Report, which began publication in 1946. Two years later he amalgamated the two journals with the publication of U.S. News and World Report. Current Biography, 1943, 428-30; Who's Who in America, 1968-1969, Vol. XXXV, 1286.

[84]Silliman to State Department (conveying Reply of General Carranza to the Pan-American note), September 10, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 746-48; List of Replies to the Pan American diplomat's message of August 11, 1915, ibid., 753.

unreasonable. . . ."[85] Having previously discussed the matter with the Secretary, on September 13, Wilson directed Lansing to call another meeting of the Pan-American diplomats "to discuss the advisability of recognizing him [Carranza] as the de facto head of the Republic; having it clearly understood that we think the acceptance of the Revolution absolutely necessary."[86] Not only was Wilson willing to accept the revolution on Carranza's terms, but he was now willing to accept Carranza.

Conditions in Chihuahua accentuated the wisdom of Wilson's decision. In addition to the military defeats, wholesale defections to the Carrancistas depleted Villa's ranks.[87] As his empire crumbled, Villa became suspicious of everyone. The more depraved of Villa's followers, Carothers reported, had convinced their chief that the "better element" was guilty of treachery in cooperating with the United States. Among those suspected were Díaz Lombardo and Angeles. Carothers himself was advised that, for his own safety, he should stay out of Mexico.[88] As

[85]Lansing to Wilson, September 12, 1915, Lansing Papers, II, 550-51.

[86]Wilson to Lansing, September 13, 1915, ibid., 552.

[87]Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 287.

[88]Carothers to State Department, September 1, 8, 1915/15997, 16083. The War Department offered Angeles asylum in the United States. See War Department to Commanding General, Southern Department, September 8, 1915/16090.

conditions grew more and more menacing, the State Department sent wires to all its consuls in northern Mexico, directing them to urge all Americans and other foreigners to leave Mexico. The consuls, if they felt they were in danger, were also urged to leave.[89]

In September, Villa made a last-ditch effort to hold onto his American support. He sent a commission of six, headed by General Roque González Garza (formerly President of the Convention) to Washington to confer with the Pan-American diplomats. The mood of González Garza, as he passed through El Paso, was not likely to win allies. He spoke to Carothers in threatening tones. He hinted that if the Villistas did not get what they wanted in Washington, they would commence hostilities against the United States. At about the same time, Carothers learned that Villa was massing his armies. The American agent feared an attack on El Paso. General Pershing, the commander at Fort Bliss, echoed Carothers' fears in a despatch to his superiors.[90]

Carothers was right about Villa massing his troops, but not for an attack on the United States. He planned to reclaim the Sonoran border towns of Naco and Agua

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[89] State Department to certain American Consuls, September 11, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 837.

[90] Carothers to State Department, September 17, 1915/16219; Pershing to Bliss, September 24, 1915, Pershing Papers, Box 372.

Prieta, which General Plutarco Calles had occupied and fortified in July in violation of the Naco Agreement of the previous January. In preparing for this campaign, Villa came to Juárez. On October 9, Carothers met with his old friend for the first time in over a month. Villa expressed confidence that Carranza would not be recognized; but if he was, the ex-bandit pledged that he "would fight until killed." In the course of their conversation, Carothers bluntly asked Villa if the rumors were true that it would be unsafe for him to rejoin the Villista camp. Villa replied: "No matter where I am or what happens, or what you may hear to the contrary, I will always be glad to see you." Villa, however, ended the interview on a warning note. He told Carothers that he felt quite certain that, as soon as he attacked Calles at Agua Prieta, officials in Washington were going to protest his violation of the Naco agreement. The protest will be ignored, he said, "only God Almighty will stop me from attacking Agua Prieta."[91] This was Carothers' last meeting with Villa.

In Washington, Wilson and Lansing started the final acts of their charade. At a September 18 meeting, Lansing tried to maneuver the six Latin American diplomats into

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[91]Carothers to State Department, October 8, 9, 1915/16427, 16441; El Paso Morning Times, October 11, 1915.

agreeing to recognize Carranza. They resented the badgering by the United States. Consequently, they would agree only to study the matter further and be prepared to report at the next meeting, scheduled for October 9, what recommendations they would make to their own governments. Lansing, meanwhile, was to confer further with representatives of the Carranza and Villa factions and be prepared to make his final recommendations.[92] The President and Secretary of State were disappointed that the conferees had not agreed to immediate recognition, but they had committed themselves to Pan-American action and were willing to see it through.

While they waited, anti-Carranza sentiment in the United States intensified as United States Army and Texas Ranger units clashed with Mexican bands along the border in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Most of the Mexicans who raided American soil were bandits, but American witnesses claimed that often the raiders joined with Constitutionalist army units after crossing the Rio Grande to the Mexican side.[93] Under orders from Washington, Silliman

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[92]Stenographic Report of the Conference on Mexican Affairs, September 18, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 754-62; Text of the Agreement of the Conference of Diplomatic Representatives, Lansing Papers, II, 554.

[93]New York Times, September 4, 1915, p. 1; ibid., September 7, 1915, p. 12; ibid., September 8, 1915, p. 14; ibid., September 18, 1915, p. 5; ibid., September 29, 1915, p. 6; ibid., October 6, 1915, p. 11; Allen Gerlach, "Conditions Along the Border-1915: The Plan of San Diego,"

protested; but Foreign Minister Jesús Acuña, while expressing regrets over the incidents, denied that the bandits came from the revolutionary army. In Washington, Arredondo irrately charged that the American press was inventing falsehoods to embarrass Carranza and that the Texas Rangers, who were notorious for baiting Mexicans, were largely responsible for the border troubles.[94]

Even while negotiating with the Carrancistas over the border troubles, Silliman suddenly departed for Washington on about September 30, evidently at the request of the First Chief. Arriving in Washington on October 7, Silliman presented a strong case in favor of Carranza. The New York Times reported that the agent brought data to prove that the Constitutionalists were completely dedicated to the First Chief and that they would be able to establish a stable government.[95] Lansing, of course, had already made up his mind to push for the recongition of Carranza at the next Pan-American conference. Since he had been charged by the conferees to present them with

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New Mexico Historical Review, XLIII (July, 1968), 199-205. Gerlach suggests that the border troubles may have been fomented by the Germans, but that Washington did not suspect it at the time.

[94]State Department to Silliman, August 28, 1915/15956; Silliman to State Department, September 1, 1915/16000; Arredondo to State Department, September 6, 21, 1915/16041, 16252.

[95]Mexican Herald, October 1, 1915; New York Times, October 8, 1915, p. 4.

additional information on both the Carranza and Villa factions, Silliman's appeal, having been given full publicity in the newspapers, gave the Secretary of State additional bargaining material.

On October 9, Lansing presented his case to the Pan-American conferees. The weight of his arguments convinced the Latin American diplomats that the Constitutionalist regime deserved de facto recognition. After the conference, Lansing told reporters that the conferees had unanimously agreed to recommend to their governments that Carranza be recognized as head of the de facto government of Mexico. On October 18, the Latin American diplomats again met with Lansing and, since their respective governments accepted their recommendations, they agreed to take the final step on the following day.[96]

The announcement of recognition found Carranza at Monterey, in the midst of a triumphal tour of the northeastern states. He received the news with quiet dignity from John W. Belt in a simple ceremony at the Hotel Salvador. With no show of emotion, Carranza expressed gratitude and pledged his government to assume full protection of the lives and interests of foreigners. Outside in the streets, there was riotous jubilation.[97]

[96]New York Times, October 10, 1915, p. 1; ibid., October 19, 1915, p. 1.

[97]Belt to State Department, October 19, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 773.

The same day that recognition was extended to Carranza, the Administration went the full measure by cutting off all support to Villa. Wilson clamped an embargo on munitions to Mexico, exempting the de facto government.[98] Lansing ordered the American inspectors withdrawn from the Juárez meatpacking house, which meant that Villa's beef could no longer meet required standards.[99]

Wilson's recognition of Carranza marked the end of a two-year struggle between two great leaders equally convinced of his own self-righteousness. In the end, it was Carranza who won. Under his steady hand, Mexico maintained her sovereignty and worked out her revolutionary solution, which culminated in the Constitution of 1917. Ironically, it was the ideas of the Zapatistas and the Villistas, as expressed at the Convention of Aguascalientes,that emerged in the Constitution. Although their ideas became the "warp and woof of the real revolution," Carranza's triumph made their realization possible.[100]

With the recongition of Carranza, the State Department was still represented in Mexico by two special agents, Carothers and Silliman, and Hall, who acted as if

[98]A Proclamation by the President of the United States, October 19, 1915, ibid., 772-73.

[99]State Department to Department of Agriculture, October 19, 1915, NA 312.114P19/61.

[100]Quirk, The Mexican Revolution, 292-93.

he were a special agent. Hall returned to Mexico City in early April, 1915, where he was finally given the Department's letter of January 19, directing him to cease posing as a special agent. He was angered because the note claimed that he had "never had any connection whatever" with the State Department. He asked for funds so that he might come to Washington to vindicate himself. Before Bryan and Cardoso de Oliveira could decide just how much money he would need to pay his passage, Hall again disappeared into Morelos.[101]

Between April and August, 1915, Hall moved back and forth between Mexico City and Cuernavaca. Apparently unable to face the fact that Bryan had disowned him, he continued to send his lengthy letters praising the Zapatistas and damning the other revolutionaries. His plans for an agricultural colony matured. On May 5, he issued a "carta Circular" (circular letter), signed by himself and Ignacio Díaz Soto y Gama, describing his proposed agrarian utopia. After the Zapatistas left Mexico City for good in August, Hall's letters to Washington became more infrequent.[102]

[101]Hall to State Department, April 4, 13, 1915/20609-1/2; Oliveira to State Department, and State Department to Oliveira, April 14, 1915/14847; Oliveira (for Hall) to State Department, and State Department to Oliveira (for Hall), April 19, 1915/14884.

[102]Hall to State Department, April 4, 13, 23, May 9, 23, June 4, 7, 8, December 11, 12, 1915/20609-1/2; Hall to Department of Agriculture, April 7, 1915/ibid.

As Carranza pressed his military campaign into Morelos in early 1916, Zapata was forced to abandon Cuernavaca, and Hall was left to fend for himself. After an arduous journey by foot and horseback through the wilds of southern Mexico (which he claimed began on March 15), he appeared in Vera Cruz on August 26, 1916. Again, he appealed for funds so that he might come to Washington. Lansing drew upon a fund used to aid destitute Americans abroad and allowed Hall passage, not to Washington but to his home in Utah. In February, 1917, Hall made one more request of the State Department—that a claim be lodged against the de facto government of Mexico for compensation for the loss of his Cuernavaca hotel.[103]

Hall's expectations for the ultimate dominance of the Zapatistas never materialized, but his letters provided Washington with a fairly accurate and sympathetic picture of Zapata's revolutionary program. Since the good Morman never functioned as an official agent, the Administration ignored his advices. Important passages in his letters were not underlined or bracketed by State Department officials or the President, as were such passages in the reports of the official agents. Had they paid closer attention to his letters, they would have been better informed of the most radical ideas of the Mexican

[103]Hall to State Department, August 26, 1916, September 11, 1916, February 14, 1917/20609-1/2.

Revolution. Instead, the Administration discounted Zapata, because he did not rival either Carranza or Villa militarily. Nor did Wilson associate with Zapata the revolutionary ideas he came to accept.

As soon as Wilson recognized Carranza, Carothers was directed to cease his representations to Villa. Obviously worried about Villa's possible response to the recognition, Lansing directed the agent to maintain his contacts on the border so the Department might be apprised of Villa's activities. Carothers dismantled the equipment in his railroad car and did not thereafter return to Mexico.[104] In late October he reported that reliable informants in El Paso hinted that Villa might cross the border before reaching Agua Prieta and attack from the American side. Hastening to Douglas, Arizona, across from Agua Prieta, Carothers met an American newspaperman who had just come from an interview with Villa. The reporter claimed to have given an enraged Villa his first news of the recognition of Carranza.[105]

In the dead of night, on November 2, Villa launched a massed cavalry attack on Agua Prieta from the Mexican

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[104] State Department to Carothers, October 19, 1915, NA 111.70C22/16a; Carothers to State Department, October 20, 1915, ibid./16.

[105] Carothers to State Department, October 21, 24, 25, 27, 29, 1915/16541, 16580, 16588, 16606, 16627; Carothers to State Department, October 31, 1915, Foreign Relations, 1915, 775.

side of the border. He was again soundly defeated, as powerful searchlights were used to illuminate the battlefield. Rumor spread through the ranks of his retreating army that the searchlights had been located on the American side of the border. Added to this rumor was the fact that the State and War Departments had allowed the Carrancistas to send reinforcements to Agua Prieta via American railroad from Laredo, Texas. Villa had reason to nurse a monumental grudge against the United States. Carothers felt that after the defeat at Agua Prieta, Villa was a bitter and vengeful an enemy as the United States had in the world.[106]

Carothers now saw Villa as nothing more than a menace. "He is absolutely irresponsible . . . ," the agent reported, "and is capable of any extreme. No promises nor assurances of good intentions can be relied upon."[107] Carothers joined Cobb in recommending that all border ports be closed to Villa's commercial agents. Access to supplies would only sustain his opportunities to commit atrocities and resist the de facto government.[108]

[106]Clarence C. Clendenen, Blood on the Border: The United States and the Mexican Irregulars (Toronto and London: The MacMillan Co., Collier-MacMillan, Ltd., 1969), 186-88; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1780.

[107]Carothers to State Department, November 8, 1915/16739.

[108]Carothers to State Department, October 27, November 8, 1915/16627, 16739; Cobb to State Department,

Although Carothers made no more representations to Villa, he remained in Douglas to keep track of his former friend's whereabouts. He was there when General Obregón arrived on November 6, to organize the pursuit of Villa. Although Obregón greeted Carothers cordially, he told American Army officers and representatives of the press that he resented the agent's presence. He charged that Carothers was an active paid agent of Villa and that he was persona non grata in Mexico. American military officials, uneasy after weeks of threatening conditions on the border, wanted nothing to hinder peaceful relations with Obregón. They joined Obregón in requesting that Carothers be relieved of his duties in Douglas. Realizing that his presence would only aggravate matters, the special agent returned to El Paso of his own volition.[109]

Although the State Department answered Obregón's charges against Carothers by claiming that he was no longer attached to Villa but had reverted to his former status as consular agent, officials in Washington realized that Constitutionalist hostility would prevent Carothers

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November 2, 8, 1915/16674, 16735.

[109] Carothers to State Department, November 6, 1915/16733; Carothers to State Deparmtent, November 10 (two), 1915, NA 111.70C22/23, 24; Col. H. J. Slocum to General Funston, November 9, 1915, Scott Papers, Box 20; New York Times, November 7, 1915, II, p. 4; ibid., November 12, 1915, p. 10; El Democrata (Mexico City), November 12, 1915.

from ever again effectively representing the United States in Mexico. Consequently, on December 4, Lansing, evidently assuming that Carothers could take advantage of one of the business opportunities previously offered to him, notified the special agent that his services would be terminated on December 31. It appeared that Carothers, like Villa, had served out his usefulness.[110]

Justifiably distressed, Carothers reported that Constitutionalist hostility prevented him from even returning to his home in Torreón and that business opportunities were not likely to come his way. These regrettable circumstances, he complained, resulted from his service to the Department. He requested, therefore, that he be retained in a different capacity. Coming to his ex-colleague's rescue, Canova called Carothers to Washington for conferences. Canova and Lansing, now fearing that Germany might be fomenting the border troubles, decided that Carothers, with all his contacts, was the man to make a continuing investigation of the border activities. Carothers was retained in this capacity until he resigned in 1918 to accept a business

[110] State Department, December 4, 1915, NA 111. 70C22/28a; New York Times, November 8, 1915, p. 9.

opportunity in the United States.[111]

Carothers never again made representations to Pancho Villa, but he kept track of the movements of Villa's band.[112] In fact, he reported to Washington on March 8, 1916, that Villa was directly south of Columbus, New Mexico, just a few miles from the border. He also warned Colonel H. J. Slocum, who commanded the American contingent at Columbus. Replying that his intelligence reports located Villa elsewhere, Slocum refused to accept the special agent's advice. Carothers bought a ticket on the next train to Columbus; Villa arrived there first. At 4:00 a.m., March 9, Villa crossed the border into Columbus, killing seven Americans and burning several buildings. Arriving at 2:00 p.m., Carothers searched through two portfolios of documents found on the scene

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[111] Carothers to State Department, December 13, 1915, NA 111.70C22/30; Canova to Carothers, December 24, 1915, ibid./28; State Department to Carothers, December 31, 1915, ibid./28a. Too numerous to cite individually, documents in the State Department's 812.00 and 111.70C22 files describe Carothers' movements and activities until his retirement in 1918.

[112] Officials of Carranza's government continued to suspect an official relationship between Carothers and Villa. Consequently, the American's movements along the border were monitored. See Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores a Luis Cabrera, September 26, 1916, AGRE, L-E-729R, Leg. 8; Eduardo Bravo, ConsulMex, El Paso, a Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, December 17, 1916, ibid., L-E-800, Leg. 15; Sixto Spada a C. J. J. Pesquiera ConsulMex, Los Angeles, December 22, 1916, ibid., L-E-803; Pesquiera a Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, January 5, 1917, ibid.

and quickly confirmed that Villa had made the attack.[113] The demand in the United States for intervention now became too strong for even Wilson to resist. The result was General John J. Pershing's famous Punitive Expedition, which attempted to bring Villa to justice.[114]

While troops and supplies were being massed in El Paso for the Punitive Expedition, Carothers wrote to his friend, General Scott, that "it looks like hell will be popping soon, and I am in thorough accord with what is being done." The documents found at Columbus, he revealed, indicated that Villa had an "obsession to kill Americans." He was inspiring his men by claiming "that they could conquer the United States." Villista prisoners that Carothers interrogated claimed that their chief suffered from "deliro de grandesa" (delusions of grandeur). Carothers diagnosed Villa's malady similarly. "This is a different man than we knew," he wrote to Scott. "All the brutality of his nature has come to the front, and he should be killed like a dog."[115] Thus, even Carothers

[113]Carothers to State Department, March 8, 10, 1916/17637, 17401; Carothers to Scott, March 5, 1916, Scott Papers, Box 22; Cobb to State Department, March 9, 1916, Foreign Relations, 1916, 480; Testimony of Carothers, Investigation of Mexican Affairs, 1781.

[114]Arthur S. Link, Wilson: Confusions and Crises, 1915-1916 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 205-209.

[115]Carothers to Scott, March 13, 1916, Scott Papers, Box 22.

made the full cycle. Having helped to elevate Villa to a position of prominence and political power, Carothers, like his superiors, turned his back on the former ward of the United States.

Silliman rejoined Carranza in early November, 1915. He journeyed to Eagle Pass, Texas, in the company of John Lind, who came to the border at the invitation of the First Chief to receive personal thanks for his efforts in behalf of the Constitutionalists.[116] Silliman was given a hero's welcome at Piedras Negras by Carranza and his staff, much as if he had truly influenced the decision in favor of recognition. The special agent's immediate task was to ask the First Chief to do something about the border troubles in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Carranza assured Silliman, as he already had Belt, that he had ordered his officers to make every effort to prevent bandits from crossing the border. Fatefully, Carranza also suggested that the United States and Mexico enter into an agreement that would give the nations mutual rights to cross the border in hot pursuit of bandits.[117]

Silliman accompanied Carranza for the remainder of

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[116] W. P. Blocker, American Vice-Consul, Piedras Negras, to State Department, October 30, 1915/16650; San Antonio Express, November 5, 1915; New York Sun, November 5, 1915.

[117] Silliman to State Department, November 3, 1915/16686; Belt to State Department, November 2 (two), 1915/16660, 16676.

his tour through the northern states of Mexico, during which time the First Chief received the adulation he deserved but seldom received. Silliman continued making representations to the officials of the de facto government. For the most part, the responses were more favorable than in the past.[118] Silliman was with Carranza in February, 1916, when he declared Querétaro the provisional capital of Mexico and announced the calling of a revolutionary convention to draft a new constitution for the Republic.[119] On March 9, after Villa's raid on Columbus, New Mexico, the agent was told to inform the First Chief that President Wilson thought the attack created "the most serious situation which has confronted this government during the entire period of Mexican unrest. . . ." Silliman was to urge Carranza to immediately deploy as many troops as necessary to "pursue, capture and exterminate" Villa and his band.[120]

Distressed by the tone of the note from Washington, Carranza approached Silliman the following day and renewed

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[118]Too numerous to cite individually, documents in the State Department's 812.00 and 125.8276 files describe Silliman's tour with Carranza and his representations to the de facto government.

[119]Silliman to State Department, February 4 (two), 1916/17217, 17227.

[120]State Department to Silliman, March 9, 1916/17382.

his offer to allow authorities to pursue bandits across the Mexican frontier, if the United States would grant reciprocal rights to Mexico. Wilson and Lansing jumped at the opportunity. Moving quickly, Lansing replied to Silliman, on March 13, that the United States agreed to the proposal and considered the arrangement to be currently in effect.[121] When Wilson did not request specific permission for Pershing to cross the border, it appeared momentarily that Carranza's troops might block the Punitive Expedition. On the eve of the expedition's scheduled entry into Mexico, Silliman eased tensions in Washington when he reported from Querétaro that he had spoken to both Obregón and Foreign Minister Cándido Aguilar and that they had approved and acquiesed to the sending of American troops to capture Villa.[122]

The Punitive Expedition did provoke trouble between the United States and Carranza's de facto government, but Silliman played no part in the settlement. Acting under the assumption that Henry P. Fletcher would soon be confirmed by the Senate as Ambassador to Mexico, Lansing, in February, 1916, issued orders changing Silliman from

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[121] Silliman to State Department, March 10, 1916, Foreign Relations, 1916, 485; State Department to Silliman, March 13, 1916, ibid., 487-88.

[122] Silliman to State Department, March 15, 1916, ibid., 491.

his consular post at Saltillo to the more prestigious post at Guadalajara. As it turned out, Fletcher was not confirmed until March, 1917, because of antagonism between the United States and Mexico that grew out of the Punitive Expedition.[123]

Silliman died at his post in Guadalajara on January 17, 1919.[124] Before moving to that city, he wrote an emotion-charged letter to Lansing in June, 1916, reviewing his service near Carranza. Reminiscing on a particular conversation with the First Chief, Silliman recalled that he had said that "whatever good there was in the revolution could not be lost. It would remain a permanent benefit of the Mexican people . . . If the revolution failed to establish an orderly government for Mexico," the agent had warned Carranza, "and if the task should fall, not by choice, but of neceysity, upon the United States, it would be solely because, after a fair trial, the men of the revolution had proven themselves unequal to it."[125] In so speaking, Silliman probably summed up Woodrow Wilson's own thinking on the Mexican Revolution in the summer of 1916.

[123]State Department to all American Consuls in Mexico, March 18, 1916, NA 123.R61/158a; Register of the State Department, 1917, 137; New York Times, February 23, 1916, p. 2; Link, Confusions and Crises, 290-91.

[124]Register of the Department of State, 1922 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), 179.

[125]Silliman to Lansing, June 30, 1916, NA 125.8276/6.

CONCLUSION

Because President Woodrow Wilson was the main architect of his foreign policy and exercised such an active and vocal role in its implementation, the roles played by his diplomats in the field have often been obscured. Such has been the case concerning the activities and influences of his executive agents who served in Mexico between May, 1913, and October, 1915. Although Wilsonian morality and missionary impulse provided a firm foundation for his Mexican policy, the executive agents, by their activities and advice, gave that policy substance and direction.

Wilson was particularly susceptible to the agent's advice when it was couched in moralistic terms. His intuitive feeling of revulsion toward Huerta and his regime, for example, was confirmed and intensified by the information received from agents William Bayard Hale and John Lind. They were New Freedom progressives, who viewed the Mexican situation through the prism of Anglo-American moral and political standards. They found Huerta's conduct totally reprehensible. Reporting in moralistic terms that touched Wilson's Puritan sensibilities, they

helped convince the President that Huerta's ouster would result in great benefit for all the Mexican people. After discovering what he thought to be a British oilman's conspiracy to sustain Huerta in power, Lind even persuaded his normally Anglophile president to court an Anglo-American confrontation over Mexican policy.

But Wilson could also be influenced by coldly realistic proposals from his agents. When Duval West, who found little in Mexico to praise, together with David Lawrence suggested as a realistic means of ending the civil war that the President recognize and support some government in Mexico, Wilson set in motion a policy that led to the recognition of Carranza.

More significantly, the agents influenced Wilson's attitude toward the Mexican Revolution. Paradoxically, Hale helped promote two different views. Because of his bungling behavior, Reginald Del Valle's anti-revolutionary views would not likely have influenced Wilson had they not been seconded by Hale. Together, the two agents temporarily convinced the President that the Constitutionalists were unworthy of his support. Hale ultimately reversed his attitude. By the end of his service to the Administration, he revealed to Wilson that the rebels' program had merit. But more than Hale, it was Lind who became the early champion of the revolutionaries. Motivated primarily by a burning desire to

use them in eliminating Huerta, he at first feared their radicalism. After realizing that the Carrencista faction was composed of little more than middle-class reformers, he became their unabashed defender. In the process, he helped to educate Wilson to the fact that the revolutionaries would ultimately create a constitutional regime that would better represent the Mexican people.

Other agents also contributed to a better understanding of the revolutionaries. George Carothers, John Silliman, and Paul Fuller accepted the revolution on its own terms. All three understood Latin Americans and their brand of politics. They did not judge Mexicans by Anglo-American moral and political standards but only in terms of their apparent ability to aid their own people. These three were the only ones who felt that the Mexicans could solve their own problems without constant American guidance.

Wilson did not listen to all advice concerning the revolutionaries. Perhaps because Lind suspected their radicalism, Wilson generally ignored the Zapatistas. Only briefly, while H. L. Hall was in Washington, were they given serious consideration. Because Hall was never accorded official status, his advice from Zapata's headquarters was largely ignored. Paradoxically, the revolutionary leader of the South became the most enduring hero of the revolution.

The interventionists also influenced the Administration. Lind's constant pleas for American aid to the revolutionaries doubtless influenced Wilson's decisions to lift the arms embargo and land troops at Vera Cruz. Only after he met the Carrancista agents in the United States did Lind repudiate his interventionism. When Leon J. Canova first went to Mexico, he counseled that the Administration must exercise a supervisory role over the revolutionaries in order to mitigate their extremist tendencies. His advice may well have contributed to the Administration's decision to promote Pancho Villa's ascendancy in Mexican politics.

Carothers was by far the most successful diplomat among the special agents. Because he was fluent in their language and colloquialisms and understood their nature, Carothers got along exceedingly well with the revolutionaries. At first, he even maintained good relations with Carranza and succeeded in securing favorable judgments from the First Chief. Only after jealousy sprouted between Carranza and Villa and the State Department directed him to concentrate on making representations to Villa did Carothers' relations with the First Chief deteriorate. Carothers enjoyed remarkable success in is relations with Villa, especially in protecting foreign lives and property. Even when Villa had his back to the wall in the summer of 1915, Carothers, with

the help of General Hugh L. Scott, was able to secure terms favorable to foreign property owners.

The records of the other diplomatic agents was more inconsistent. When he first arrived in Mexico, Lind gave promise of becoming an able shirt-sleeve diplomat; but ultimately these talents were overridden by his hatred for Huerta, making him callous, even hostile, toward all the Mexican officials with whom he dealt. Through no fault of his own, Hale got nowhere in attempting to influence Carranza along Anglo-American lines. Cool and calculating, Canova revealed a pragmatic ability to get along well with all Mexican factions. His diplomatic talents were never fully utilized and were ultimately forefeited when he was forced to interfere in the crude process of revolutionary justice. Silliman was never effective. His inability to express himself adequately in Spanish and his maudlin behavior in the First Chief's presence early marked him as a weakling. We can only conjecture at Lawrence's possible effectiveness. By the time he was brought into play, the die was cast, and his mission had virtually no influence on the course of relations with Carranza.

Wilson's executive agents also influenced the revolutionaries and the course of the revolution. Lind's prolonged stay in Mexico may well have hardened Huerta's will to remain in power. This in turn helped to insure

that the usurper would be ousted by the revolutionaries. Thus, the final settlement, instead of being a half-way or compromise arrangement, helped to insure that Mexico's reform needs were satisfied. In influencing the Administration in favor of the revolutionaries, Lind played an even more critical role. Because Wilson favored a revolutionary settlement, he would countenance no plan to end the strife in Mexico that would not leave the revolutionaries in command.

Carothers influenced the situation in Mexico even more than did Lind. Within weeks of the outset of his mission, he was an outspoken champion of the Constitutionalists and sought to aid their cause. Since his attitudes were formed through associations with the Villistas, it was natural, when the split with Carranza came, that he should favor Villa. Indeed, his activities abetted the Villa-Carranza split. As Carranza charged, the very fact that Villa was accorded special representation from the United States encouraged his insubordination toward his chief. Even if American meddling did help bring on a rupture in the revolutionary ranks, the long-run results were beneficial. Out of this dispute came the agreement to call a revolutionary convention. The tenor of the convention, when it met at Aguascalientes, exhibited to Carranza that his Plan of Guadalupe was inadequate to satisfy the wants and needs of the revolutionaries.

Carothers' despatches, along with Canova's and Fuller's, were probably as influential as any other factor in Wilson's decision to promote Villa's ascendancy in Mexican politics. Until late summer, 1915, Carothers gave a uniformly favorable impression of Villa. It was through Carothers that Villa displayed his open show of friendship after the Vera Cruz incident. It was also through Carothers that Villa showed his willingness to be guided by the United States.

Under the tutelage of Carothers and General Scott, Villa showed promise of becoming the outstanding figure in the Mexican Revolution. That Carothers' presence provided a calming and steadying effect on Villa is exhibited by the fact that the Mexican general's depredations were always less numerous and severe when the American was by his side. Even the Villistas acknowledged that Carothers had more influence over their leader than they did themselves.

Carothers even acted as an unofficial minister of foreign affairs for Villa. He undertook (not always at the direction of the State Department) to represent Villa to other revolutionary factions. Seeking to conciliate the Villistas and Carrancistas, he involved himself in the negotiations leading to the Pact of Torreón and to the final agreement to call the Convention of Aguascalientes. Carothers promoted the abortive Villa-

Obregón axis. He helped arrange the first meeting between Villa and Zapata. Along with Canova, he attended that conference and counseled the two revolutionary leaders on what behavior would make the best impression in the United States and throughout the world. Carothers' role as a diplomatic representative for Villa, however, reached its zenith when the American came to Washington in late summer, 1914, to plead the case of the Villistas to his own superiors.

To a lesser degree, Canova and Silliman also became involved in Mexican politics. Canova lent his support to promoting Villa's ascendancy. He also helped hold Villa in check when the Centaur of the North threatened to assassinate Obregón and scuttle any chance of a revolutionary convention. While the convention met at Aguascalientes, he sought to eliminate Carranza by encouraging a conspiracy involving unscrupulous Americans and a rebel general, Lucio Blanco. Having established cordial relations with all the factions within the Conventionist camp, he was prepared to promote their interests, until he aided Eduardo Iturbide and lost their friendship. Silliman exercised no influence over the Carrancistas. His despatches seldom contained enough favorable comment to serve as pro-Carranza propaganda. But twice he went to Washington in the First Chief's behalf, and the second time he provided evidence that may

have helped the Administration present to the Pan American conference a plausible case for the recognition of Carranza.

The activities of Carothers and Silliman point up a failing in the State Department's use of special agents in Mexico. Carothers was chosen because on one occasion he was able to establish cordial relations with Villa, Silliman because he was an old friend of Carranza's. Hall, although he never served officially, was chosen for similar reasons. Such reasons for tendering appointments were not in themselves bad. But by countenancing the agents' activities in behalf of one or another revolutionary faction, the Department implicitly encouraged them to become too personally involved. As a result, each agent allowed his admiration for a particular factional leader to blind him to that leader's shortcomings. For example, it was months after Villa began to reveal that he lacked the emotional stability to be an adequate leader for an entire nation before Carothers acknowledged that shortcoming.

Another noticeable failing of the Department's system of representation was the lack of communication between the agents accredited to the different factions. Wilson's supreme desire was that the leaders of Mexico find some peaceful settlement which would embody the necessary reforms. Yet there was no attempt to coordinate

the efforts of the agents toward that end. Without consulting one another, each made separate appeals to different factional leaders and, in reply to Washington, promoted the interests of one faction, often presenting a hostile attitude toward the others.

Although each of the agents, State Department and Presidential, exhibited a bias of some sort, all were diligent in pursuing their tasks. Charges of corruption touched four of them—Carothers, Silliman, Canova, and West. The charges of accepting bribes leveled by the Zapatistas at Silliman, Canova and West were without foundation. The charges that Carothers accepted favors from Villa are difficult to ignore. They came from numerous and varied sources, including Agent Canova. Whatever the validity of the charges, Carothers seems to have benefited little in the long run. He lost virtually everything he owned in Mexico and, after August, 1915, was never even able to return to his home in Torreón.

Undoubtedly, the inconsistent meddling of Wilson and his executive agents in Mexican affairs left a legacy of animosity which took years to erase. But in the end, Wilson did respect the independence of Mexico. Mexico did not become a protectorate of the United States. Although he intervened twice with armed forces, both times the troops were withdrawn and the Mexicans

were allowed to continue their revolution until they had reached their own settlement.

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EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

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Major Field: History

Title of Thesis: Woodrow Wilson's Executive Agents in Mexico:
From the Beginning of his Administration
To the Recognition of Venustiano Carranza

Approved:

Major Professor and Chairman

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EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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